THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,

A ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

By ANN RATCLIFFE,

Author of the Romance of the Foreſt, A Sicilian Romance, &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Fate ſits on theſe dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive,
Her voice, in ſullen echoes through the courts,
Tells of a nameleſs deed.

Boſton:

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THE

MYSTERIES

OF

UDOLPHO.

CHAP. XXXV.

" Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month loſt in ſnow profound,
When Sol from Cancer ſends the ſeaſons bland,
And in their nothern cave the ſtorms hath bound;
From ſilent mountains ſtraight, with ſtartling ſound,
Torrents are hurl'd, green hills emerge, and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flow'rs are crown'd;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peaſant's heart o'erflow."

BEATTIE.

SEVERAL of her ſucceeding days paſſed in ſuſpenſe, for Ludovico could only learn from the ſoldiers, that there was a priſoner in the apartment, deſcribed to him by Emily, and that he was a Frenchman, whom they had taken in one of their ſkirmiſhes, with a party of his countrymen. During this interval, Emily eſcaped the perſecutions of Bertolini, and Verezzi, by confining herſelf to her apartment; except that ſometimes, in an evening, ſhe ventured to walk in the adjoining corridor. Montoni appeared to reſpect his laſt promiſe, though he had prophaned his firſt: for to his protection only could ſhe attribute her preſent repoſe; and in this ſhe was now ſo ſecure, that ſhe did not wiſh to leave the caſtle, till ſhe could obtain ſome certainty concerning Valancourt; for which ſhe waited, indeed, without any ſacrifice of her own comfort, ſince no circumſtance had occurred to make her eſcape probable.

On the fourth day, Ludovico informed her, that he had hopes of being admitted to the preſence of the priſoner; it being the turn of a ſoldier, with whom he had been for ſometime familiar, to attend him on the following night. He was not deceived in his hope; for under pretence of carrying in a pitcher of water, he entered the priſon, though, his prudence having prevented him from telling the ſentinel the real motive of his viſit, he was obliged to make his conference with the priſoner a very ſhort one.

Emily awaited the reſult in her own apartment, Ludovico having promiſed to accompany Annette to the corridor, in the evening; where, after ſeveral hours impatiently counted, he arrived. Emily, having then uttered the name of Valancourt, could articulate no more, but heſitated in trembling expectation. "The Chevalier would not entruſt me with his name, Signora," replied Ludovico; "but, when I juſt mentioned yours, he ſeemed overwhelmed with joy, though he was not ſo much ſurpriſed as I expected." "Does he then remember me?" ſhe exclaimed.

"O! it is Monſ. Valancourt," ſaid Annette, and looked impatiently at Ludovico, who underſtood her look, and replied to Emily: "Yes, lady, the Chevalier does, indeed, remember you, and, I am ſure, has a very great regard for you, and I made bold to ſay you had for him. He then inquired how you came to know he was in the caſtle, and whether you ordered me to ſpeak to him. The firſt queſtion I could not anſwer, but the ſecond I did; and then he went off into his ecſtaſies again. I was afraid his joy would have betrayed him to the ſentinel at the door."

"But how does he look, Ludovico?" interrupted Emily: "is he not melancholy and ill with this long confinement?"—"Why, as to melancholy, I ſaw no ſymptom of that, lady, while I was with him, for he ſeemed in the fineſt ſpirits I ever ſaw any body in, in all my life. His countenance was all joy, and, if one may judge from that, he was very well; but I did not aſk him." "Did he ſend me no meſſage?" ſaid Emily. "O yes, Signora, and ſomething beſides," replied Ludovico, who ſearched his pockets. "Surely, I have not loſt it," added he. "The Chevalier ſaid, he would have written, madam, if he had had pen and ink, and was going to have ſent a very long meſſage, when the ſentinel entered the room, but not before he had given me this." Ludovico then drew forth a miniature from his boſom, which Emily received with a trembling hand, and perceiv-

ed to be a portrait of herſelf—the very picture which her mother had loſt ſo ſtrangely in the fiſhing houſe at La Vallee.

Tears of mingled joy and tenderneſs flowed to her eyes, while Ludovico proceeded——"Tell your Lady, ſaid the Chevalier, as he gave me the picture, 'that this has been my companion, and only ſolace in all my misfortunes. Tell her, that I have worn it next my heart, and that I ſend it her as the pledge of an affection, which can never die; that I would not part with it, but to her, for the wealth of worlds, and that I now part with it, only in the hope of ſoon receiving it from her hands. Tell her'—Juſt then, Signora, the ſentinel came in, and the Chevalier ſaid no more; but he had before aſked me to contrive an interview for him with you; and when I told him, how little hope I had of prevailing with the guard to aſſiſt me, he ſaid, that was not, perhaps, of ſo much conſequence as I imagined, and bade me contrive to bring back your anſwer, and he would inform me of more than he choſe to do then. So this, I think lady, is the whole of what paſſed."

"How, Ludovico, ſhall I reward you for your zeal?" ſaid Emily: "but, indeed, I do not now poſſeſs the means. When can you ſee the Chevalier again?" "That is uncertain, Signora," replied he. "It depends upon who ſtands guard next: there are not more than one or two among them, from whom I would dare to aſk admittance to the priſon chamber."

"I need not bid you remember, Ludovico," reſumed Emily, "how very much intereſted I am in your ſeeing the Chevalier ſoon; and, when you do ſo, tell him, that I have received the picture, and, with the ſentiments he wiſhed. Tell him I have ſuffered much, and ſtill ſuffer—" She pauſed. "But ſhall I tell him you will ſee him, lady?" ſaid Ludovico. "Moſt certainly I will," replied Emily. "But when, Signora, and where?" "That muſt depend upon circumſtances," returned Emily.—"The place, and the hour, muſt be regulated by his opportunities."

"As to the place, mademoiſelle," ſaid Annette, "there is no other place in the caſtle, beſides this corridor, where *we* can ſee him in ſafety, you know; and, as for the hour,—it muſt be when all the Signors are aſleep, if that ever happens!" "You may mention theſe circumſtances to the Chevalier, Ludovico," ſaid ſhe, checking the flippancy of Annette, and leave them to his judgment and opportunity. Tell him my heart is unchanged. But, above all, let him ſee you again as ſoon as poſſible; and, Ludovico, I think it is needleſs to tell you I ſhall very anxiouſly

look for you." Having then wiſhed her good night, Ludovico deſcended the ſtaircaſe, and Emily retired to reſt, but not to ſleep, for joy now rendered her as wakeful, as ſhe had ever been from grief. Montoni and his caſtle had all vaniſhed from her mind, like the frightful viſion of a necromancer, and ſhe wandered, once more, in fairy ſcenes of unfading happineſs:

——— "As when, beneath the beam
Of ſummer moons, the diſtant woods among,
Or by ſome flood, all ſilver'd with the gleam,
The ſoft embodied Fays thro' airy portals ſtream."

A week elapſed, before Ludovico again viſited the priſon; for the ſentinels, during that period, were men, in whom he could not confide, and he feared to awaken curioſity, by aſking to ſee their priſoner. In this interval, he communicated to Emily terrific reports of what was paſſing in the caſtle; of riots, quarrels, and of carouſals more alarming than either; while from ſome circumſtances, which he mentioned, ſhe not only doubted, whether Montoni meant ever to releaſe her, but greatly feared, that he had deſigns concerning her,—ſuch as ſhe had formerly dreaded. Her name was frequently mentioned in the converſations, which Bertolini and Verezzi held together, and, at thoſe times, they were frequently in contention. Montoni had loſt large ſums to Verezzi, ſo that there was a dreadful poſſibility of his deſigning her to be a ſubſtitute for the debt; but, as ſhe was ignorant, that he had formerly encouraged the hopes of Bertolini alſo, concerning herſelf, after the latter had done him ſome ſignal ſervice, ſhe knew not how to account for theſe contentions between Bertolini and Verezzi. The cauſe of them, however, appeared to be of little conſequence, for ſhe thought ſhe ſaw deſtruction approaching in many forms, and her entreaties to Ludovico to contrive an eſcape, and to ſee the priſoner again, were more urgent than ever.

At length, he informed her, that he had again viſited the Chevalier, who had directed him to confide in the guard of the priſon, from whom he had already received ſome inſtances of kindneſs, and who had promiſed to permit his going into the caſtle for half an hour, on the enſuing night, when Montoni and his companions ſhould be engaged at their carouſals. "This was kind, to be ſure," added Ludovico: "but Sebaſtian knows he runs no riſque in letting the Chevalier out, for, if he can get beyond the bars and iron doors of the caſtle, he muſt be cunning indeed. But the Chevalier deſired me, Signora, to go to you

immediately, and to beg you would allow him to visit you, this night, if it was only for a moment, for that he could no longer live under the same roof, without seeing you; the hour, he said, he could not mention, for it must depend on circumstances (just as you said, Signora) and the place he desired you would appoint, as knowing which was best for your own safety."

Emily was now so much agitated by the near prospect of meeting Valancourt, that it was sometime, before she could give any answer to Ludovico, or consider of the place of meeting; when she did, she saw none, that promised so much security, as the corridor, near her own apartment, which she was checked from leaving, by the apprehension of meeting any of Montoni's guests, on their way to their rooms; and she dismissed the scruples, which delicacy opposed, now that a serious danger was to be avoided dy encountering them. It was settled, therefore, that the Chevalier should meet her in the corridor, at that hour of the night, which Ludovico, who was to be upon the watch, should judge safest: and Emily, as may be imagined, passed this interval in a tumult of hope and joy, anxiety and impatience. Never, since her residence in the castle, had she watched, with so much pleasure, the sun set behind the mountains, and twilight shade, and darkness veil the scene, as on this evening. She counted the notes of the great clock, and listened to the steps of the sentinels, as they changed the watch, only to rejoice, that another hour was gone. "O, Valancourt!" said she, "after all I have suffered; after our long, long separation, when I thought I should never—never see you more—we are still to meet again! O! I have endured grief, and anxiety, and terror, and let me, then, not sink beneath this joy!" These were moments, when it was impossible for her to feel emotions of regret, or melancholy, for any ordinary interests; even the reflection, that she had resigned the estates, which would have been a provision for herself and Valancourt for life, threw only a light and transient shade upon her spirits. The idea of Valancourt, and that she should see him so soon, alone occupied her heart.

At length the clock struck twelve; she opened the door to listen, if any noise was in the castle, and heard only distant shouts of riot and laughter, echoed feebly along the gallery. She guessed, that the Signor and his guests were at the banquet. "They are now engaged for the night," said she; "and Valancourt will soon be here." Having softly closed the door, she paced the room with impatient steps, and often went to the casement to listen for the lute; but all was silent, and, her agitation every

moment encreaſing, ſhe was at length unable to ſupport herſelf, and ſat down by the window. Annette, whom ſhe detained, was, in the meantime, as loquacious as uſual; but Emily heard ſcarcely any thing ſhe ſaid, and having at length riſen to the caſement, ſhe diſtinguiſhed the chords of the lute, ſtruck with an expreſſive hand, and then the voice, ſhe had formerly liſtened to, accompanied it.

"Now riſing love they fann'd, now pleaſing dole
They breath'd in tender muſings through the heart;
And now a graver, ſacred ſtrain they ſtole,
As when ſeraphic hands an hymn impart!"

Emily wept in doubtful joy and tenderneſs; and, when the ſtrain ceaſed, ſhe conſidered it as a ſignal, that Valancourt was about to leave the priſon. Soon after, ſhe heard ſteps in the corridor;—they were the light, quick ſteps of hope: ſhe could ſcarcely ſupport herſelf, as they approached, but opening the door of the apartment, ſhe advanced to meet Valancourt, and, in the next moment, ſunk in the arms of a ſtranger. His voice his countenance inſtantly convinced her, and ſhe fainted away.

On reviving, ſhe found herſelf ſupported by the ſtranger, who was watching over her recovery, with a countenance of ineffable tenderneſs and anxiety. She had no ſpirits for reply, or inquiry, ſhe aſked no queſtions, but burſt into tears, and diſengaged herſelf from his arms: when the expreſſion of his countenance changed to ſurpriſe and diſappointment, and he turned to Ludovico for an explanation; Annette ſoon gave the information, which Ludovico could not. "O, ſir, !" ſaid ſhe, in a voice, interrupted with ſobs; "O, ſir! you are not the other Chevalier. We expected Monſieur Valancourt, but you are not he! O Ludovico! how could you deceive us ſo? my poor lady will never recover it—never!" The ſtranger, who now appeared much agitated, attempted to ſpeak, but his words faltered; and then ſtriking his hand againſt his forehead, as if in ſudden deſpair, he walked abruptly to the other end of the corridor.

Suddenly, Annette dried her tears, and ſpoke to Ludovico. "But, perhaps," ſaid ſhe, "after all, the other Chevalier is not this: perhaps the Chevalier Valancourt is ſtill below." Emily raiſed her head. "No," replied Ludovico, "Monſieur Valancourt, never was below, if this gentleman is not he," "if you ſir," ſaid Ludovico, addreſſing the ſtranger, "would but have had the goodneſs to truſt me with your name, this miſtake had been avoided." "Moſt true," replied the ſtranger, ſpeaking in

broken Italian, "but it was of the utmoſt conſequence to me, that my name ſhould be concealed from Montoni. Madam," added he then, addreſſing Emily in French, "will you permit me to apologize for the pain I have occaſioned you, and to explain to you alone my name, and the circumſtance, which has led me into this error? I am of France;—I am your countryman;—we are met in a foreign land." Emily tried to compoſe her ſpirits, yet ſhe heſitated to grant his requeſt. At length, deſiring, that Ludovico would wait on the ſtaircaſe, and detaining Annette, ſhe told the ſtranger, that her woman underſtood very little Italian, and begged he would communicate what he wiſhed to ſay in that language.—Having withdrawn to a diſtant part of the corridor, he ſaid, with a long drawn ſigh, "You, madam, are no ſtranger to me, though I am ſo unhappy as to be unknown to you.—My name is Du Pont; I am of France, of Gaſcony, your native province, and have long admired,—and, why ſhould I affect to diſguiſe it!—have long loved you." He pauſed, but, in the next moment, proceeded. "My family, madam, is probably not unknown to you, for we lived within a few miles of La Vallee, and I have, ſometimes, had the happineſs of meeting you on viſits in the neighbourhood. I will not offend you by repeating how much you intereſted me; how much I loved to wander in the ſcenes you frequented; how often I viſited your favourite fiſhing houſe, and lamented the circumſtance, which, at that time, forbade me to reveal my paſſion. I will not explain how I ſurrendered to temptation, and became poſſeſſed of a treaſure, which was to me ineſtimable; a treaſure, which I committed to your meſſenger, a few days ago, with expectations very different from my preſent ones. I will ſay nothing of theſe circumſtances, for I know they will avail me little; let me only ſupplicate from your forgiveneſs, and the picture, which I ſo unwarily returned. Your generoſity will pardon the theft, and reſtore the prize. My crime has been my puniſhment; for the portrait I ſtole has contributed to nouriſh a paſſion, which muſt ſtill be my torment."

Emily now interrupted him. "I think, ſir, I may leave it to your integrity to determine, whether, after what has juſt appeared, concerning Monſ. Valancourt, I ought to return the picture. I think you will acknowledge, that this would not be generoſity; and you will allow me to add, that it would be doing myſelf an injuſtice. I muſt conſider myſelf honoured by your good opinion, but"——and ſhe heſitated,—"the miſtake of this evening makes it unneceſſary for me to ſay more."

"It does, madam,—alas! it does!" ſaid the ſtranger, who, after a long pauſe, proceeded.—"But you will allow me to ſhew my diſintereſtedneſs, though not my love, and will accept the ſervices I offer. Yet, alas! what ſervices can I offer? I am myſelf a priſoner, a ſufferer, like you. But, dear as liberty is to me, I would not ſeek it through half the hazards I would encounter to deliver you from this receſs of vice. Accept the offered ſervices of a friend; do not refuſe me the reward of having, at leaſt, attempted to deſerve your thanks."

"You deſerve them already, ſir," ſaid Emily; "the wiſh deſerves my warmeſt thanks. But you will excuſe me for reminding you of the danger you incur by prolonging this interview. It will be a great conſolation to me to remember, whether your friendly attempts to releaſe me ſucceed or not, that I have a countryman, who would ſo generouſly protect me,"—Monſieur Du Pont took her hand, which ſhe but feebly attempted to withdraw, and preſſed it reſpectfully to his lips. "Allow me to breathe another fervent ſigh for your happineſs," ſaid he, "and to applaud myſelf for an affection, which I cannot conquer." As he ſaid this, Emily heard a noiſe from her apartment, and, turning round, ſaw the door from the ſtaircaſe open, and a man ruſh into her chamber. "I will teach you to conquer it," cried he, as he advanced into the corridor, and drew a ſtiletto, which he aimed at Du Pont, who was unarmed, but who, ſtepping back, avoided the blow, and then ſprung upon Verezzi, from whom he wrenched the ſtiletto. While they ſtruggled in each other's graſp, Emily, followed by Annette, ran further into the corridor, calling on Ludovico, who was, however, gone from the ſtaircaſe, and, as ſhe advanced, terrified and uncertain what to do, a diſtant noiſe that ſeemed to ariſe from the hall, reminded her of the danger ſhe was incurring; and, ſending Annette forward in ſearch of Ludovico, ſhe returned to the ſpot were Du Pont and Verezzi were ſtill ſtruggling for victory. It was her own cauſe which was to be decided with that of the former, whoſe conduct, independently of this circumſtance, would, however, have intereſted her in his ſucceſs, even had ſhe not diſliked and dreaded Verezzi. She threw herſelf in a chair, and ſupplicated them to deſiſt from further violence, till, at length, Du Pont forced Verezzi to the floor, where he lay ſtunned by the violence of his fall; and ſhe then entreated Du Pont to eſcape from the room, before Montoni, or his party, ſhould appear; but he ſtill refuſed to leave her unprotected; and, while Emily, now more terrified for him, than for herſelf, enforced the entreaty, they heard ſteps aſcending the private ſtaircaſe.

"O you are loſt!" cried ſhe, "theſe are Montoni's people." Du Pont made no reply, but ſupported Emily, while, with a ſteady, though eager, countenance, he awaited their appearance, and, in the next moment, Ludovico, alone mounted the landing place. Throwing an haſty glance round the chamber, "Follow me," ſaid he, "as you value your lives; we have not an inſtant to loſe!"

Emily inquired what had occurred, and whither they were to go?

"I cannot ſtay to tell you now, Signora," replied Ludovico: "fly! fly!"

She immediately followed him, accompanied by Monſ. Du Pont, down the ſtaircaſe, and along a vaulted paſſage, when ſuddenly ſhe recollected Annette, and inquired for her. "She awaits us further on, Signora," ſaid Ludovico, almoſt breathleſs with haſte; "the gates were open, a moment ſince, to a party juſt come in from the mountains: they will be ſhut I fear before we can reach them! Through this door, Signora," added Ludovico, holding down the lamp, "take care, here are two ſteps." Emily followed, trembling ſtill more, than before ſhe had underſtood that her eſcape from the caſtle depended upon the preſent moment; while Du Pont ſupported her, and endeavoured, as they paſſed along, to cheer her ſpirits.

"Speak low, Signor," ſaid Ludovico, "theſe paſſages ſend echoes all round the caſtle."

"Take care of the light," cried Emily, "you go ſo faſt, that the air will extinguiſh it."

Ludovico now opened another door, where they found Annette, and the party then deſcended a ſhort flight of ſteps into a paſſage, which, Ludovico ſaid, led round the inner court of the caſtle, and opened into the outer one. As they advanced, confuſed and tumultuous ſounds, that ſeemed to come from the inner court, alarmed Emily. "Nay, Signora," ſaid Ludovico, "our only hope is in that tumult; while the Signor's people are buſied about the men, who are juſt arrived, we may, perhaps, paſs unnoticed through the gates. But huſh!" he added, as they approached the ſmall door, that opened into the outer court, "if you will remain here a moment, I will go to ſee whether the gates are open, and any body is in the way. Pray extinguiſh the light, Signor, if you hear me talking," continued Ludovico, delivering the lamp to Du Pont, "and remain quite ſtill."

Saying this, he ſtepped out upon the court, and they cloſed the door, liſtening anxiouſly to his departing ſteps. No voice,

however, was heard in the court, which he was croſſing, though a confuſion of many voices yet iſſued from the inner one. "We ſhall ſoon be beyond the walls," ſaid Du Pont ſoftly to Emily, "ſupport yourſelf a little longer, Madam, and all will be well."

But ſoon they heard Ludovico ſpeaking loud, and the voice alſo of ſome other perſon, and Du Pont immediately extinguiſhed the lamp. "Ah! it is too late!" exclaimed Emily, "what is to become of us?" They liſtened again, and then perceived, that Ludovico was talking with a ſentinel, whoſe voices were heard alſo by Emily's favourite dog, that had followed her from the chamber, and now barked loudly. "This dog will betray us!" ſaid Du Pont, "I will hold him." "I fear he has already betrayed us!" replied Emily. Du Pont, however, caught him up, and, again liſtening to what was going on without, they heard Ludovico ſay, "I'll watch the gates the while."

"Stay a minute," replied the ſentinel, "and you need not have the trouble, for the horſes will be ſent round to the outer ſtables, then the gates will be ſhut, and I can leave my poſt." "I don't mind the trouble, comrade," ſaid Ludovico, "you will do ſuch another good turn for me, ſometime. Go—go, and fetch the wine; the rogues, that are juſt come in, will drink it all elſe."

The ſoldier heſitated, and then called aloud to the people in the ſecond court, to know why they did not ſend out the horſes, that the gates might be ſhut; but they were too much engaged, to attend to him, even if they had heard his voice.

"Aye—aye," ſaid Ludovico, "they know better than that; they are ſharing it all among them; if you wait till the horſes come out, you muſt wait till the wine is drunk. I have had my ſhare already, but ſince you do not care about yours, I ſee no reaſon why I ſhould not have that too."

"Hold, hold, not ſo faſt," cried the ſentinel, "do watch then, for a moment: I'll be with you preſently."

"Don't hurry yourſelf," ſaid Ludovico coolly, "I have kept guard before now. But you may leave me your trombone,* that if the caſtle ſhould be attacked, you know, I may be able to defend the paſs like a hero."

"There, my, good fellow," returned the ſoldier, "there, take it—it has ſeen ſervice, though it could do little in defending the caſtle. I'll tell you a good ſtory though about this ſame trombone."

"You'll tell it better when you have had the wine," ſaid Ludovico. "There! they are coming out from the court already."

* A kind of Blunderbuſs.

"I'll have the wine, though," ſaid the ſentinel, running off. "I won't keep you a minute."

"Take your time, I am in no haſte," replied Ludovico, who was already hurrying acroſs the court, when the ſoldier came back. "Whither ſo faſt, friend—whither ſo faſt?" ſaid the latter. What! is this the way you keep watch? I muſt ſtand to my poſt myſelf, I ſee."

"Aye, well," replied Ludovico, "you have ſaved me the trouble of following you further, for I wanted to tell you, if you have a mind to drink the Tuſcany wine you muſt go to Sebaſtain, he is dealing it out; the other that Federico has is not worth having. But you are not likely to have any, I ſee for they are all coming out."

"By St. Peter! ſo they are," ſaid the ſoldier, and again ran off, while Ludovico, once more at liberty haſtened to the door of the paſſage, where Emily was ſinking under the anxiety this long diſcourſe had occaſioned; but, on his telling them the court was clear, they followed him to the gates, without waiting another inſtant yet not before he had ſeized two horſes, that had ſtrayed from the ſecond court, and were picking a ſcanty meal among the graſs, which grew between the pavement of the firſt.

They paſſed, without interruption, the dreadful gates, and took the road that led down among the woods, Emily, Monſieur Du Pont and Annette on foot, and Ludovico, who was mounted on one horſe, leading the other. Having reached them they ſtopped, while Emily and Annette, were placed on horſeback with their two protectors, when, Ludovico leading the way, they ſet off as faſt as the broken road, and the feeble light, which a riſing moon threw among the foliage, would permit.

Emily was ſo much aſtoniſhed by this ſudden departure, that ſhe ſcarcely dared to believe herſelf awake; and ſhe yet much doubted whether this adventure would terminate in eſcape,—a doubt, which had too much probability to juſtify it; for, before they quitted the woods, they heard ſhouts in the wind, and, on emerging from them, ſaw lights move quickly near the caſtle above. Du Pont whipped his horſe, and with ſome difficulty compelled him to go faſter.

"Ah! poor beaſt," ſaid Ludovico, "he is weary enough;—he has been out all day, but, Signor, we muſt fly for it, now; for yonder are the lights coming this way."

Having given his own horſe a laſh, they now both ſet off on a full gallop; and, when they again looked back, the lights were ſo diſtant as ſcarcely to be diſcerned, and the voices were

ſunk into ſilence. The travellers then abated their pace, and, conſulting whither they ſhould direct their courſe, it was determined they ſhould deſcend into Tuſcany, and endeavour to reach the Mediterranean, where they could readily embark for France. Thither Du Pont meant to attend Emily, if he ſhould learn, that the regiment he had accompanied into Italy, was returned to his native country.

They were now in the road which Emily had travelled with Ugo and Bertrand; but Ludovico, who was the only one of the party, acquainted with the paſſes of theſe mountains, ſaid, that a little further on, a bye-road, branching from this, would lead them down into Tuſcany with very little difficulty; and that, at a few leagues diſtance, was a ſmall town, where neceſſaries could be procured for their journey.

"But, I hope," added he, "we ſhall meet with no ſtraggling parties of banditti; ſome of them are abroad, I know. However, I have got a good trombone, which will be of ſome ſervice, if we ſhould encounter any of thoſe brave ſpirits. You have no arms, Signor?" "Yes," replied Du Pont, "I have the villain's ſtiletto, who would have ſtabbed me—but let us rejoice in our eſcape from Udolpho, nor torment ourſelves with looking out for dangers, that may never arrive."

The moon was now riſen high over the woods, that hung upon the ſides of the narrow glen, through which they wandered, and afforded them light ſufficient to diſtinguiſh their way, and to avoid the looſe and broken ſtones, that frequently croſſed it. They now travelled leiſurely, and in profound ſilence; for they had ſcarcely yet recovered from the aſtoniſhment, into which this ſudden eſcape had thrown them.—Emily's mind, eſpecially was ſunk, after the various emotions it had ſuffered, into a kind of muſing ſtillneſs, which the repoſing beauty of the ſurrounding ſcene and the creeping murmur of the night-breeze among the foliage above contributed to prolong. She thought of Valancourt, and of France, with hope, and ſhe would have thought of them with joy, had not the firſt events of this evening haraſſed her ſpirits too much, to permit her now too feel ſo lively a ſenſation. Meanwhile, Emily was alone the object of Dupont's melancholy conſideration; yet, with the deſpondency he ſuffered, as he muſed on his recent diſappointment, was mingled a ſweet pleaſure, occaſioned by her preſence, though they did not now exchange a ſingle word. Annette thought of this wonderful eſcape, of the buſtle in which Montoni and his people muſt be, now that their flight was diſcovered; of her native country, whither

ſhe hoped ſhe was returning, and of her marriage with Ludovico, to which there no longer appeared any impediment, for poverty ſhe did not conſider ſuch. Ludovico, on his part congratulated himſelf, on having reſcued his Annette and *Signora* Emily from the danger that had ſurrounded them; on his own liberation from people whoſe manners he had long deteſted, on the freedom he had given to Monſieur Du Pont; on his proſpect of happineſs with the object of his affections, and not a little on the addreſs, with which he had deceived the ſentinel, and conducted the whole of this affair.

Thus variouſly engaged in thought, the travellers paſſed on ſilently, for above an hour, a queſtion only being, now and then aſked by Du Pont, concerning the road, or a remark uttered by Annette, reſpecting objects, ſeen imperfectly in the twilight.

At length, lights were perceived twinkling on the ſide of a mountain, and Ludovico had no doubt, that they proceeded from the town he had mentioned, while his companions, ſatisfied by this aſſurance ſunk again into ſilence. Annette was the firſt who interrupted this. "Holy Peter!" ſaid ſhe, "What ſhall we do for money on our journey? for I know neither I, or my lady, have a ſingle ſequin; the Signor took care of that!"

This remark produced a ſerious inquiry, which ended in as ſerious embarraſſment, for Du Pont had been rifled of nearly all his money when he was taken priſoner; the remainder he had given to the ſentinel, who had enabled him occaſionally to leave his priſon chamber; and Ludovico, who had for ſometime found a difficulty, in procuring any part of the wages due to him, had now ſcarcely caſh ſufficient to procure neceſſary refreſhment at the firſt town, in which they ſhould arrive.

Their poverty was the more diſtreſſing, ſince it would detain them among the mountains, where, even in a town, they could ſcarcely conſider themſelves ſafe from Montoni. The travellers, however, had only to proceed and dare the future; and they continued their way through lonely wilds and duſky vallies, where the overhanging foliage now admitted, and then excluded the moonlight; wilds ſo deſolate, that they appeared, on the firſt glance, as if no human being had ever trode them before. Even the road, in which the party were, did but ſlightly contradict this error, for the high graſs and other luxuriant vegetation, with which it was overgrown, told how very ſeldom the foot of a traveller had paſſed it.

At length, from a diſtance, was heard the faint tinkling of a ſheep bell; and, ſoon after, the bleat of flocks, and the party then

knew, that they were near ſome human habitation, for the light, which Ludovico had fancied to proceed from a town, had long been concealed by intervening mountains. Cheered by this hope, they quickened their pace along the narrow paſs they were winding, and it opened upon one of thoſe paſtoral vallies of the Apennines, which might be painted for a ſcene of Arcadia, and whoſe beauty and ſimplicity are finely contraſted by the grandeur of the ſnow topt mountains above.

The morning light, now glimmering in the horizon, ſhewed faintly, at a little diſtance, upon the brow of a hill, which ſeemed to peep from "under the opening eyelids of the morn," the town they were in ſearch of, and which they ſoon after reached. It was not without ſome difficulty, that they there found a houſe, which could afford ſhelter for themſelves and their horſes; and Emily deſired they might not reſt longer than was neceſſary for refreſhment. Her appearance excited ſome ſurpriſe; for ſhe was without a hat, having had time only to throw on her veil before ſhe left the caſtle, a circumſtance that compelled her to regret again the want of money, without which it was impoſſible to procure this neceſſary article of dreſs.

Ludovico, on examining his purſe; found it even inſufficient to ſupply preſent refreſhment, and Du Pont, at length, ventured to inform the landlord, whoſe countenance was ſimple and honeſt of their exact ſituation, and requeſted that he would aſſiſt them to purſue their journey; a purpoſe which he promiſed to comply with, as far as he was able, when he learned that they were priſoners eſcaping from Montoni, whom he had too much reaſon to hate. But, though he conſented to lend them freſh horſes to carry them to the next town, he was too poor himſelf to truſt them with money, and they were again lamenting their poverty, when Ludovico who had been with his tired horſes to the hovel, which ſerved for a ſtable, entered the room, half frantic with joy, in which his auditors ſoon participated. On removing the ſaddle from one of the horſes, he had found beneath it a ſmall bag, containing, no doubt, the booty of one of the *condottieri*, who had returned from a plundering excurſion, juſt before Ludovico left the caſtle, and whoſe horſe having ſtrayed from the inner court, while his maſter was engaged in drinking, had brought away the treaſure, which the ruffian had conſidered the reward of his exploit.

On counting over this, Du Pont found that it would be more than ſufficient to carry them all to France, where he now determined to accompany Emily, whether he ſhould obtain intelli-

gence of his regiment, or not; for, though he had as much confidence in the integrity of Ludovico, as his ſmall knowledge of him allowed, he could not endure the thought of committing her to his care for the voyage; nor, perhaps, had he reſolution enough to deny himſelf the dangerous pleaſure, which he might derive from her preſence.

He now conſulted them, concerning the ſea port, to which they ſhould direct their way, and Ludovico, better informed of the geography of the country, ſaid, that Leghorn was the neareſt port of conſequence, which Du Pont knew alſo to be the moſt likely of any in Italy to aſſiſt their plan, ſince from thence veſſels of all nations were continually departing. Thither, therefore, it was determined, that they ſhould proceed.

Emily, having purchaſed a little ſtraw hat, ſuch as was worn by the peaſant girls of Tuſcany, and ſome other little neceſſary equipments for the journey, and the travellers, having exchanged their tired horſes for others better able to carry them, recommenced their joyous way, as the ſun was riſing over the mountains, and, after travelling through this romantic country, for ſeveral hours, began to deſcend into the vale of Arno. And here Emily beheld all the charms of ſylvan and paſtoral landſcape united, adorned with the elegant villas of the Florentine nobles, and diverſified with the various riches of cultivation. How vived the ſhrubs, that embowered the ſlopes, with the woods, that ſtretched amphitheatrically along the mountains! and, above all, how elegant the outline of theſe waving Apennines, now ſoftening from the wildneſs, which their interior regions exhibited! At a diſtance, in the eaſt, Emily diſcovered Florence, with its towers riſing on the brilliant horizon, and its luxuriant plain, ſpreading to the feet of the Apennines, ſpeckled with gardens and magnificent villas, or coloured with groves of orange and lemon, with vines, corn, and plantations of olives and mulberry; while, to the weſt, the vale opened to the waters of the Mediterranean, ſo diſtant, that they were known only by a blueiſh line that appeared upon the horizon, and by the light marine vapour, which juſt ſtained the æther above.

With a full heart, Emily hailed the waves, that were to bear her back to her native country, the remembrance of which however, brought with it a pang; for ſhe had there no home to receive, no parents to welcome her, but was going, like a forlorn pilgrim, to weep over the ſad ſpot, where he, who *was* her father, lay interred. Nor were ſpirits cheered, when ſhe conſidered how long it would probably be before ſhe ſhould ſee Valancourt, who might be ſtationed with his regiment in a diſ-

tant part of France, and that, when they did meet, it would be only to lament the ſucceſsful villainy of Montoni; yet, ſtill ſhe would have felt inexpreſſible delight at the thought of being once more in the ſame country with Valancourt, had it even been certain, that ſhe could not ſee him.

The intenſe heat, for it was now noon, obliged the travellers to look out for a ſhady receſs, where they might reſt, for a few hours, and the neighbouring thickets abounding with wild grapes, raſberries, and figs, promiſed them grateful refreſhment. Soon after, they turned from the road into a grove, whoſe thick foliage entirely excluded the ſunbeams, and where a ſpring guſhing from a rock, gave coolneſs to the air; and, having alighted and turned the horſes to graze, Annette and Ludovico, ran to gather fruit from the ſurrounding thickets, of which they ſoon returned withan abundance. The travellers ſeated under the ſhade of a pine and cypreſs grove and on turf, enriched with ſuch a profuſion of fragrant flowers, as Emily had ſcarcely ever ſeen, even among the Pyrennees, took their ſimple repaſt, and viewed, with new delight, beneath the dark umbrage of gigantic pines, the glowing landſcape ſtretching to the ſea.

Emily and Du Pont gradually became thoughtful and ſilent; but Annette was all joy and loquacity, and Ludovico was gay, without forgetting the reſpectful diſtance, which was due to his companions. The repaſt being over, Du Pont recommended Emily to endeavour to ſleep, during theſe ſultry hours, and deſiring the ſervants would do the ſame, ſaid he would watch the while; but Ludovico wiſhed to ſpare him this trouble; and Emily and Annette wearied with travelling, tried to repoſe, while he ſtood guard with his trombone.

When Emily, refreſhed by ſlumber, awoke, ſhe found the ſentinel aſleep on his poſt and Du Pont awake, but loſt in melancholy thought. As the ſun was yet too high to allow them to continue their journey, and as it was neceſſary, that Ludovico, after the toils and trouble he had ſuffered, ſhould finiſh his ſleep, Emily took this opportunity of inquiring by what accident Du Pont became Montoni's priſoner, and he, pleaſed with the intereſt this inquiry expreſſed and with the excuſe it gave him for talking to her of himſelf, immediately anſwered her curioſity.

"I came into Italy, madam," ſaid Du Pont, "in the ſervice of my country. In an adventure among the mountains, our party, engaging with the bands of Montoni, was routed, and I, with a few of my comrades, was taken priſoner. When they told me, whoſe captive I was, the name of Montoni ſtruck me, for I

remembered, that Madame Cheron, your aunt, had married an Italian of that name, and that you had accompanied them into Italy. It was not, however, till ſometime after, that I became convinced this was the ſame Montoni, or learned, that you madam, was under the ſame roof with myſelf. I will not pain you by deſcribing what were my emotions upon this diſcovery, which I owed to a ſentinel, whom I had ſo far won to my intereſt, that he granted me many indulgencies, one of which was very important to me, and ſomewhat dangerous to himſelf: but he perſiſted in refuſing to convey any letter, or notice of my ſituation to you, for he juſtly dreaded a diſcovery and the conſequent vengeance of Montoni. He however enabled me to ſee you more than once. You are ſurpriſed, madam, and I will explain myſelf. My health and ſpirits ſuffered extremely from want of air and exerciſe, and, at length, I gained ſo far upon the pity, or the avarice of the man, that he gave me the means of walking on the terrace."

Emily now liſtened, with very anxious attention, to the narrative of Du Pont, who proceeded:

"In granting this indulgence, he knew, that he had nothing to apprehend from a chance of my eſcaping from a caſtle, which was vigilantly guarded, and the neareſt terrace of which roſe over a perpendicular rock; he ſhewed me alſo," continued Du Pont, "a door concealed in the cedar wainſcot of the apartment where I was confined, which he inſtructed me how to open; and which, leading into a paſſage, formed within the thickneſs of the wall, that extended far along the caſtle, finally opened in an obſcure corner of the eaſtern rampart. I have ſince been informed, that there are many paſſages of the ſame kind concealed within the prodigious walls of that edifice, and which were, undoubtedly contrived for the purpoſe of facilitating eſcapes in time of war. Through this avenue, at the dead of night, I often ſtole to the terrace, where I walked with the utmoſt caution, leſt my ſteps ſhould betray me to the ſentinels on duty in diſtant parts; for this end of it, being guarded by high buildings, was not watched by ſoldiers. In one of theſe midnight wanderings, I ſaw light in a caſement that overlooked the rampart, and which, I obſerved, was immediately over my priſon chamber. It occurred to me, that you might be in that apartment, and, with the hope, of ſeeing you, I placed myſelf oppoſite to the window."

Emily, remembering the figure that had formerly appeared on the terrace, and which had occaſioned her ſo much anxiety, exclaimed, "It was you then, Monſieur Du Pont, who occaſioned

me much fooliſh terror; my ſpirits were, at that time, ſo much weakened by long ſuffering, that they took alarm at every hint." Du Pont, after lamenting, that he had occaſioned her any apprehenſion, added, "As I reſted on the wall, oppoſite to your caſement, the conſideration of your melancholy ſituation, and of my own, called from me involuntary ſounds of lamentation, which drew you, I fancy to the caſement; I ſaw there a perſon, whom I believed to be you. O! I will ſay nothing of my emotion at that moment; I wiſhed to ſpeak, but prudence reſtrained me, till the diſtant footſtep of a ſentinel compelled me ſuddenly to quit my ſtation.

"It was ſometime, before I had another opportunity of walking, for I could only leave my priſon, when it happened to be the turn of one man to guard me; meanwhile, I became convinced from ſome circumſtances related by him, that your apartment was over mine, and, when again I ventured forth, I returned to your caſement, where again I ſaw you, but without daring to ſpeak. I waved my hand, and you ſuddenly diſappeared; then it was, that I forgot my prudence, and yielded to lamentation; again you appeared—you ſpoke—I heard the well known accent of your voice! and, at that moment, my diſcretion would have forſaken me again, had I not heard alſo the approaching ſteps of a ſoldier, when I inſtantly quitted the place, though not before the man had ſeen me. He followed down the terrace and gained ſo faſt upon me, that I was compelled to make uſe of a ſtratagem, ridiculous enough, to ſave myſelf. I had heard of the ſuperſtition of many of theſe men, and I uttered a ſtrange noiſe, with a hope, that my purſuer would miſtake it for ſomething ſupernatural, and deſiſt from purſuit. Luckily for myſelf I ſucceeded; the man, it ſeems, was ſubject to fits, and the terror he ſuffered threw him into one, by which accident I ſecured my retreat. A ſenſe of the danger I had eſcaped, and the increaſed watchfulneſs, which my apearance had occaſioned among the ſentinels, deterred me ever after from walking on the terrace; but, in the ſtillneſs of night, I frequently beguiled myſelf with an old lute, procured for me by a ſoldier, which I ſometimes accompanied with my voice, and ſometimes, I will acknowledge, with a hope of making myſelf heard by you; but it was only a few evenings ago, that this hope was anſwered. I then thought I heard a voice in the wind, calling me; yet, even then I feared to reply, leſt the ſentinel at the priſon door ſhould hear me. Was I right, madam, in this conjecture—was it you who ſpoke?"

"Yes," ſaid Emily, with an involuntary ſigh, "you was right indeed."

Du Pont, obſerving the painful emotions, which this queſtion revived, now changed the ſubject. "In one of my excurſions through the paſſage, which I have mentioned, I overheard a ſingular converſation," ſaid he.

"In the paſſage!" ſaid Emily, with ſurpriſe.

"I heard it in the paſſage, ſaid Du Pont, "but it proceeded from an apartment, adjoining the wall, within which the paſſage wound, and the ſhell of the wall was there ſo thin, and was alſo ſomewhat decayed, that I could diſtinctly hear every word ſpoken, on the other ſide. It happened that Montoni and his companions were aſſembled in the room, and Montoni began to relate the extraordinary hiſtory of the lady, his predeceſſor in the caſtle. He did, indeed, mention ſome very ſurpriſing circumſtances, and whether they were ſtrictly true, his conſcience muſt decide; I fear it will determine againſt him. But you, madam, have doubtleſs heard the report, which he deſigns ſhould circulate, on the ſubject of that lady's myſterious fate."

"I have, ſir," replied Emily, "and I perceive, that you doubt it."

"I doubted it before the period I am ſpeaking of," rejoined Du Pont;—"but ſome circumſtances mentioned by Montoni, greatly contributed to my ſuſpicions. The account I then heard, almoſt convinced me, that he was a murderer. I trembled for you;—the more ſo that I had heard the gueſts mention your name in a manner, that threatened your repoſe; and, knowing, that the moſt impious men are often the moſt ſuperſtitious, I determined to try whether I could not awaken their conſciences, and awe them from the commiſſion of the crime I dreaded. I liſtened cloſely to Montoni, and, in the moſt ſtriking paſſages of his ſtory, I joined my voice, and repeated his laſt words in a diſguiſed and hollow tone."

"But was you not afraid of being diſcovered?" ſaid Emily.

"I was not," replied Du Pont; "for I knew, that, if Montoni had been acquainted with the ſecret of this paſſage, he would not have confined me in the apartment, to which it led. I knew alſo, from better authority, that he was ignorant of it. The party, for ſometime, appeared inattentive to my voice; but, at length, were ſo much alarmed, that they quitted the apartment; and, having heard Montoni order his ſervants to ſearch it, I returned to my priſon, which was very diſtant from this part of the paſſage." "I remember perfectly to have heard

of the converſation you mention," ſaid Emily; "it ſpread a general alarm among Montoni's people, and I will own I was weak enough to partake of it."

Monſieur Du Pont and Emily thus continued to converſe of Montoni, and then of France, and of the plan of their voyage; when Emily told him, that it was her intention to retire to a convent in Languedoc, where ſhe had been formerly treated with much kindneſs, and from thence to write to her relation Monſieur Queſnel, and inform him of her conduct. There, ſhe deſigned to wait, till La Vallee ſhould again be her own, whither ſhe hoped her income would ſometime permit her to return, for Du Pont now taught her to expect, that the eſtate of which Montoni had attempted to defraud her was not irrecoverably loſt, and he again congratulated her on her eſcape from Montoni, who, he had not a doubt, meant to have detained her for life. The poſſibility of recovering her aunt's eſtates for Valancourt and herſelf lighted up a joy in Emily's heart, ſuch as ſhe had not known for many months; but ſhe endeavoured to conceal this from Monſieur Du Pont, leſt it ſhould lead him to a painful remembrance of his rival.

They continued to converſe, till the ſun was declining in the weſt, when Du Pont awoke Ludovico, and they ſet forward on their journey. Gradually deſcending the lower ſlopes of the valley, they reached the Arno, and wound along its paſtoral margin, for many miles, delighted with the ſcenery around them, and with the remembrances, which its claſſic waves revived. At a diſtance, they heard the gay ſong of the peaſants among the vineyards, and obſerved the ſetting ſun tint the waves with yellow luſtre, and twilight draw a duſky purple over the mountains, which, at length, deepened into night. Then the *luceiola* the fire-fly of Tuſcany, was ſeen to flaſh its ſudden ſparks among the foliage, while the *cicala*, with its ſhrill note, became more clamorous than even during the noonday heat, loving beſt the hour when the Engliſh beetle, with leſs offenſive ſound,

> ——————————— "winds
> His ſmall but ſullen horn,
> As oft he riſes 'midſt the twilight path,
> Againſt the pilgrim borne in heedleſs hum*."

The travellers croſſed the Arno by moonlight, at a ferry, and learning, that Piſa was diſtant only a few miles down the river, they wiſhed to have proceeded thither in a boat, but, as none

*Collins.

could be procured, they ſet out on their wearied horſes for that city. As they approached it, the vale expanded into a plain, variegated with vineyards, corn, olives and mulberry groves; but it was late, before they reached its gates, where Emily was ſurpriſed to hear the buſy ſound of footſteps and the tones of muſical inſtruments, as well as to ſee the lively groups, that filled the ſtreets, and ſhe almoſt fancied herſelf again at Venice; but here was no moonlight ſea—no gay gondolas, daſhing the waves,—no *Palladian* palaces, to throw enchantment over the fancy and lead it into the wilds of fairy ſtory. The Arno rolled through the town, but no muſic trembled from Balconies over its waters; it gave only the buſy voices of ſailors on board veſſels juſt arrived from the Mediterranean; the melancholy heaving of the anchor, and the ſhrill boatſwain's whiſtle; ſounds which, ſince that period, have there ſunk almoſt into ſilence. They then ſerved to remind Du Pont, that it was probable he might hear of a veſſel, ſailing ſoon to France from this port, and thus be ſpared the trouble of going to Leghorn. As ſoon as Emily had reached the inn, he went therefore to the quay, to make his inquiries; but after all the endeavours of himſelf and Ludovico, they could hear of no bark, deſtined immediately for France, and the travellers returned to their reſting place. Here alſo, Du Pont endeavoured to learn where his regiment then lay, but could acquire no information concerning it. The travellers retired early to reſt, after the fatigues of this day; and, on the following, roſe early, and, without pauſing to view the celebrated antiquities of the place, or the wonders of its hanging tower, purſued their journey in the cooler hours, through a charming country, rich with wine, and corn and oil. The Apennines, no longer awful, or even grand, here ſoftened into the beauty of ſylvan and paſtoral landſcape; and Emily, as ſhe deſcended them, looked down delighted on Leghorn, and its ſpacious bay, filled with veſſels, and crowned with theſe beautiful hills.

She was no leſs ſurpriſed and amuſed, on entering this town, to find it crowded with perſons in the dreſſes of all nations; a ſcene which reminded her of a Venetian maſquerade, ſuch as ſhe had witneſſed at the time of the Carnival; but here, was buſtle, without gaiety, and noiſe inſtead of muſic, while elegance was to be looked for only in the waving outlines of the ſurrounding hills.

Monſieur Du Pont, immediately on their arrival, went down to the quay, where he heard of ſeveral French veſſels, and of one that was to ſail in a few days for Marſeilles, from whence another veſſel could be procured, without difficulty, to take them acroſs the gulf

of Lyons towards Narbonne, on the coaſt not many leagues from which city he underſtood the convent was ſeated, to which Emily wiſhed to retire. He, therefore, immediately engaged with the captain to take them to Marſeilles, and Emily was delighted to hear, that her paſſage to France was ſecured. Her mind was now relieved from the terror of purſuit, and the pleaſing hope of ſoon ſeeing her native country—that country which held Valancourt, reſtored to her ſpirits a degree of cheerfulneſs, ſuch as ſhe had ſcarcely known, ſince the death of her father. At Leghorn alſo, Du Pont heard of his regiment, and that it had embarked for France; a circumſtance, which gave him great ſatisfaction, for he could now accompany Emily thither, without reproach to his conſcience, or apprehenſion of diſpleaſure from his commander. During theſe days, he ſcrupulouſly forbore to diſtreſs her by a mention of his paſſion, and ſhe was compelled to eſteem and pity, though ſhe could not love him. He endeavoured to amuſe her by ſhewing the environs of the town, and they often walked together on the ſea ſhore, and on the buſy quays, where Emily was frequently intereſted by the arrival and departure of veſſels, participating in the joy of meeting friends, and, ſometimes, ſhedding a ſympathetic tear to the ſorrow of thoſe, that were ſeparating. It was after having witneſſed a ſcene of the latter kind, that ſhe arranged the following ſtanzas:

THE MARINER.

Soft came the breath of ſpring; ſmooth flow'd the tide;
And blue the heaven in its mirror ſmil'd;
The white ſail trembled, ſwell'd, expanded wide,
The buſy ſailors at the anchor toil'd.

With anxious friends, that ſhed the parting tear,
The deck was throng'd—how ſwift the moments fly!
The veſſel heaves, the farewel ſigns appear;
Mute is each tongue, and eloquent each eye!

The laſt dread moment comes!—The ſailor-youth
Hides the big drop, and ſmiles amid his pain,
Sooths his ſad bride, and vows eternal truth,
"Farewel, my love—we ſhall—ſhall meet again!"

Long on the ſtern, with waving hand he ſtood;
The crowded ſhore ſinks, leſſening, from his view,
As gradual glides the bark along the flood;
His bride is ſeen no more—"Adieu!—adieu!"

The breeze of Eve moans low, her ſmile is o'er,
Dim ſteals her twilight down the crimſon'd weſt,
He climbs the top-moſt maſt, to ſeek once more
The far-ſeen coaſt, where all his wiſhes reſt.

He views its dark line on the diſtant ſky,
And Fancy leads him to his little home,
He ſees his weeping love, he hears her ſigh,
He ſooths her griefs, and tells of joys to come.

Eve yields to night, the breeze to wintry gales,
In one vaſt ſhade the ſeas and ſhores repoſe;
He turns his aching eyes,—his ſpirit fails,
The chill tear falls;—ſad to the deck he goes.

The ſtorm of midnight ſwells, the ſails are furl'd,
Deep ſounds the lead but finds no friendly ſhore,
Faſt o'er the waves, the wretched bark is hurl'd,
"O Ellen, Ellen! we muſt meet no more!"

Lightnings, that ſhew the vaſt and foamy deep,
The rending thunders, as they onward roll,
The loud loud winds, that o'er the billows ſweep—
Shake the firm nerve, appall the braveſt ſoul!

Ah! what avails the ſeamen's toiling care!
The ſtraining cordage burſts, the maſt is riv'n;
The ſounds of terror groan along the air,
Then ſink afar;—the bark on rocks is driv'n!

Fierce o'er the wreck the whelming waters paſs'd,
The helpleſs crew ſunk in the roaring main!
Henry's faint accents trembled in the blaſt——
"Farewel, my love!—we ne'er ſhall meet again!"

Oft, at the calm and ſilent evening hour,
When ſummer-breezes linger on the wave,
A melancholy voice is heard to pour
Its lonely ſweetneſs o'er poor Henry's grave!

And oft, at midnight, airy ſtrains are heard
Around the grove, where Ellen's form is laid;
Nor is the dirge by village-maidens fear'd,
For lovers' ſpirits guard the holy ſhade!

CHAP. XXXVI.

"Oh! the joy
Of young ideas, painted on th' mind
In the warm glowing colours fancy ſpreads
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely!" SACRED DRAMAS.

WE now return to Languedoc and to the mention of Count De Villefort, the nobleman, who ſucceeded to an eſtate of the Marquis De Villeroi, ſituated near the monaſtery of St. Claire. It may be recollected, that this chateau was uninhabited, when St. Aubert and his daughter were in the neighbourhood, and that the former was much affected on diſcovering himſelf to be ſo near Chateau-le-Blanc, a place, concerning which the good old La Voiſion afterwards dropped ſome hints, that had alarmed Emily's curioſity.

It was in the year 1584, the beginning of that, in which St. Aubert died, that Francis Beauveau, Count De Villefort, came into poſſeſſion of the manſion and extenſive domain called Chateau-le-Blanc, ſituated in the province of Languedoc, on the ſhore of the Mditerranean. This eſtate, which, during ſome centuries, had belonged to his family, now deſcended to him, on the deceaſe of his relative, the Marquis De Villeroi, who had been latterly a man of reſerved manners and auſtere character; circumſtances, which, together with the duties of his profeſſion, that often called him into the field, had prevented any degree of intimacy with his couſin, the Count De Villefort. For many years, they had known little of each other, and the Count received the firſt intelligence of his death, which happened in a diſtant part of France, together with the inſtruments, that gave him poſſeſſion of the domain Chateau-le-Blanc; but it was not till the following year, that he determined to viſit that eſtate, when he deſigned to paſs the autumn there. The ſcenes of Chateau-le-Blanc often came to his remembrance, heightened by the touches, which a warm imagination gives to the recollection of early pleaſures; for, many years before, in the lifetime of the Marchioneſs, and at that age when the mind is particularly ſenſible to impreſſions of gaiety and delight, he had once viſited this ſpot, and though he had paſſed a long intervening period amidſt the vexations and tumults of public affairs, which too frequently corrode the heart, and vitiate the taſte, the ſhades of Languedoc and the grandeur

of its diſtant ſcenery had never been remembered by him with indifference.

During many years, the Chateau had been abandoned by the late Marquis, and, being inhabited only by an old ſteward and his wife, had been ſuffered to fall much into decay. To ſuperintend the repairs, that would be requiſite to make it a comfortable reſidence, had been a principal motive with the Count for paſſing the Autumnal months in Languedoc; and neither the remonſtrances, or the tears of the Counteſs, for, on urgent occaſions, ſhe could weep, were powerful enough to overcome his determination. She prepared, therefore, to obey the command which ſhe could not conquer, and to reſign the gay aſſemblies of Paris,—where her beauty was generally unrivalled and won the applauſe, to which her wit had but feeble claim—for the twilight canopy of woods, the lonely grandeur of mountains and the ſolemnity of gothic halls and of long, long galleries, which echoed only the ſolitary ſtep of a domeſtic, or the meaſured clink, that aſcended from the great clock—the ancient monitor of the hall below. From theſe melancholy expectations ſhe endeavoured to relieve her ſpirits by recollecting all that ſhe had ever heard, concerning the joyous vintage of the plains of Languedoc; but there, alas! no airy forms would bound to the gay melody of Pariſian dances, and a view of the ruſtic feſtivities of peaſants could afford little pleaſure to a heart, in which even the feelings of ordinary benevolence had long ſince decayed under the corruptions of luxury.

The Count had a ſon and a daughter, the children of a former marriage, who, he deſigned, ſhould accompany him to the ſouth of France; Henri, who was in his twentieth year, was in the French ſervice; and Blanche, who was not yet eighteen, had been hitherto confined to the convent, where ſhe had been placed immediately on her father's ſecond marriage. The preſent Counteſs, who had neither ſufficient ability or inclination to ſuperintend the education of her daughter-in-law, had adviſed this ſtep, and the dread of ſuperior beauty had ſince urged her to employ every art, that might prevail on the Count to prolong the period of Blanche's ſecluſion; it was, therefore, with extreme mortification, that ſhe now underſtood that he would no longer ſubmit on this ſubject, yet it afforded her ſome conſolation to conſider, that, though the Lady Blanche would emerge from her convent, the ſhades of the country would, for ſometime, veil her beauty from the public eye.

On the morning which commenced the journey, the poſtillions ſtopped at the convent, by the Count's order, to take up Blanche,

whose heart beat with delight, at the prospect of novelty and freedom now before her. As the time of her departure drew nigh, her impatience had increased, and the last night, during which she counted every note of every hour, had appeared the most tedious of any she had ever known. The morning light, at length, dawned; the matin bell rung; she heard the nuns descending from their chambers, and she started from a sleepless pillow to welcome the day, which was to emancipate her from the severities of a cloister, and introduce her to a world, where pleasure was ever smiling, and goodness ever blessed—where, in short nothing but pleasure and goodness reigned! When the bell of the great gate rang, and the sound was followed by that of carriage wheels, she ran, with a palpitating heart, to her lattice, and perceiving her father's carriage in the court below, danced, with airy steps, along the gallery, where she was met by a nun with a summons from the abbess. In the next moment, she was in the parlour, and in the presence of the Countess, who now appeared to her as an angel, that was to lead her into happiness. But the emotions of the Countess, on beholding her, were not in unison with those of Blanche, who had never appeared so lovely as at this moment, when her countenance, animated by the lightning smile of joy, glowed with the beauty of happy innocence.

After conversing for a few minutes with the abbess, the Countess rose to go. This was the moment, which Blanche had anticipated with such eager expectation, the summit from which she looked down upon the fairy land of happiness, and surveyed all its enchantment; was it a moment, then, for tears of regret? Yet it was so. She turned, with an altered and dejected countenance, to her young companions, who were come to bid her farewel, and wept! Even my lady abbess, so stately and so solemn, she saluted with a degree of sorrow, which, an hour before, she would have believed it impossible to feel, and which may be accounted for by considering how reluctantly we all part even with unpleasing objects, when the separation is consciously for ever. Again she kissed the poor nuns and then followed the Countess from that spot with tears, which she expected to leave only with smiles.

But the presence of her father and the variety of objects, on the road, soon engaged her attention, and dissipated the shade, which tender regret had thrown upon her spirits. Inattentive to a conversation, which was passing between the Countess and a Mademoiselle Bearn, her friend, Blanche sat, lost in pleasing re-

verie, as ſhe watched the clouds floating ſilently along the blue expanſe, now veiling the ſun and ſtretching their ſhadows along the diſtant ſcene, and then diſcloſing all his brightneſs. The journey continued to give Blanche inexpreſſible delight, for new ſcenes of nature were every inſtant opening to her view, and her fancy became ſtored with gay and beautiful imagery.

It was on the evening of the ſeventh day, that the travellers came within view of Chateau-le-Blanc, the romantic beauty of whoſe ſituation ſtrongly impreſſed the imagination of Blanche, who obſerved, with ſublime aſtoniſhment, the Pyrenean mountains, which had been ſeen only at a diſtance during the day, now riſing within a few leagues, with the wild cliffs and immenſe precipices, which the evening clouds, floating round them now diſcloſed, and again veiled. The ſetting rays, that tinged their ſnowy ſummits with a roſeate hue, touched their lower points with various colouring, while the blueiſh tint, that pervaded their ſhadowy receſſes, gave the ſtrength of contraſt to the ſplendour of light. The plains of Languedoc, bluſhing with the purple vine and diverſified with groves of mulberry, almond and olives, ſpread far to the north and the eaſt; to the ſouth, appeared the Mediterranean, clear as cryſtal, and blue as the heavens it reflected, bearing on its boſom veſſels, whoſe white ſails caught the ſunbeams, and gave animation to the ſcene. On a high promontory, waſhed by the waters of the Mediterranean, ſtood her father's manſion, almoſt ſecluded from the eye by woods of intermingled pine, oak and cheſnut, which crowned the eminence, and ſloped towards the plains, on one ſide; while on the other, they extended to a conſiderable diſtance along the ſea ſhores.

As Blanche, drew nearer, the gothic features of this ancient manſion ſucceſſively appeared—firſt an embattled turret, riſing above the trees—then the broken arch of an immenſe gateway, retiring beyond them; and ſhe almoſt fancied herſelf approaching a caſtle, ſuch as is often celebrated in early ſtory, where the knights look out from the battlements on ſome champion below, who, clothed in black armour, comes with his companions, to reſcue the fair lady of his love from the oppreſſion of his rival; a ſort of legends, to which ſhe had once or twice obtained acceſs in the library of her convent, that like many others, belonging to the monks, was ſtored with theſe reliques of romantic fiction.

The carriages ſtopped at a gate, which led into the domain of the chateau, but which was now faſtened; and the great bell,

that had formerly ſerved to announce the arrival of ſtrangers, having long ſince fallen from its ſtation, a ſervant climbed over a ruined part of the adjoining wall, to give notice to thoſe within of the arrival of their lord.

As Blanche leaned from the coach window, ſhe reſigned herſelf to the ſweet and gentle emotions, which the hour and the ſcenery awakened, the ſun had now left the earth, and twilight began to darken the mountains; while the diſtant waters, reflecting the bluſh that ſtill glowed in the weſt, appeared like a line of light, ſkirting the horizon. The low murmur of waves, breaking on the ſhore, came in the breeze, and, now and then, the melancholy daſhing of oars was feebly heard from a diſtance. She was ſuffered to indulge her penſive mood, for the thoughts of the reſt of the party were ſilently engaged upon the ſubjects of their ſeveral intereſts. Meanwhile, the Counteſs, reflecting with regret, upon the gay parties ſhe had left at Paris, ſurveyed with diſguſt what ſhe thought the gloomy woods and ſolitary wildneſs of the ſcene; and, ſhrinking from the proſpect of being ſhut up in an old caſtle, was prepared to meet every object with diſpleaſure. The feelings of Henri were ſomewhat ſimilar to thoſe of the Counteſs; he gave a mournful ſigh to the delights of the capital, and to the remembrance of a lady, who, he believed, had engaged his affections, and who had certainly faſcinated his imagination; but the ſurrounding country, and the mode of life, on which he was entertaining, had, for him, at leaſt, the charm of novelty, and his regret was ſoftened by the gay expectations of youth.

The gates being at length unbarred, the carriage moved ſlowly on, under ſpreading cheſnuts, that almoſt excluded the remains of day, following what had been formerly a road, but which now overgrown with luxuriant vegetation, could be traced only by the boundary, formed by trees, on either ſide, and which wound for near half a mile among the woods, before it reached the chateau. This was the very avenue that St. Aubert and Emily had formerly entered, on their firſt arrival in the neighbourhood, with the hope of finding a houſe that would receive them, for the night, and had ſo abruptly quitted, on perceiving the wildneſs of the place, and a figure, which the poſtillion had fancied was a robber.

"What a diſmal place is this!" exclaimed the Counteſs, as the carriage penetrated the deeper receſſes of the woods. "Surely my lord, you do not mean to paſs all the autumn in this barbarous ſpot! one ought to bring hither a cup of the waters of Lethe,

that the remembrance of pleaſanter ſcenes may not heighten, at leaſt, the the natural drearineſs of theſe."

"I ſhall be governed by circumſtances, madam," ſaid the Count, "this barbarous ſpot was inhabited by my anceſtors."

The carriage now ſtopped at the chateau, where at the door of the great hall appeared the old ſteward and the Pariſian ſervants, who had been ſent to prepare the chateau, waiting to receive their lord. Lady Blanche now perceived, that the edifice was not built entirely in the gothic ſtyle, but that it had additions of a more modern date; the large and gloomy hall, however, into which ſhe now entered, was entirely gothic, and ſumptuous tapeſtry, which it was now too dark to diſtinguiſh, hung upon the walls, and depictured ſcenes from ſome of the ancient Provencal romances. A vaſt gothic window, embroidered with *clematis* and eglantine, that aſcended to the ſouth, led the eye, now that the caſements were thrown open, through this verdant ſhade, over a ſloping lawn, to the tops of dark woods, that hung upon the brow of the promontory. Beyond appeared the waters of the Mediterranean, ſtretching far to the ſouth, and to the eaſt, where they were loſt in the horizon; while, to the north-eaſt, they were bounded by the luxuriant ſhores of Languedoc and Provence, enriched with wood, and gay with vines and ſloping paſtures; and to the ſouth-weſt by the majeſtic Pyrenees, now fading from the eye, beneath the gradual gloom.

Blanche, as ſhe croſſed the hall, ſtopped a moment to obſerve this lovely proſpect, which the evening twilight obſcured, yet did not conceal. But ſhe was quickly awakened from the complacent delight, which this ſcene had diffuſed upon her mind, by the Counteſs, who diſcontented with every object around, and impatient for refreſhment and repoſe, haſtened forward to a large parlour, whoſe cedar wainſcot, narrow, pointed caſements, and dark ceiling of carved cypreſs wood, gave it an aſpect of peculiar gloom, which the dingy green velvet of the chairs and couches, fringed with tarniſhed gold, had once been deſigned to enliven.

While the Counteſs inquired for refreſhment, the Count, attended by his ſon, went to look over ſome part of the chateau, and Lady Blanche reluctantly remained to witneſs the diſcontent and ill humour of her ſtep-mother.

"How long have you lived in this deſolate place?" ſaid her ladyſhip, to the old houſe keeper, who came to pay her duty. "Above twenty years, your ladyſhip, on the next feaſt of St. Jerome."

"How happened it, that you have lived here ſo long, and almoſt alone, too? I underſtood, that the chateau, had been ſhut up for ſome years?"

"Yes, madam, it was for many years after my late lord, the Count, went to the wars; but it is above twenty years, ſince I and my huſband came into his ſervice. The place is ſo large and has of late been ſo lonely, that we were loſt in it, and, after ſometime, we went to live in a cottage at the end of the woods, near ſome of the tenants, and came to look after the chateau, every now and then. When my lord returned to France from the wars, he took a diſlike to the place, and never came to live here again, and ſo he was ſatisfied with our remaining at the cottage. Alas—alas! how the chateau is changed from what it once was! What delight my late lady uſed to take in it! I well remember when ſhe came here a bride, and how fine it was.—Now, it has been neglected ſo long, and is gone into ſuch decay! I ſhall never ſee thoſe days again!"

The Counteſs appearing to be ſomewhat offended by the thoughtleſs ſimplicity, with which the old woman regretted former times, Dorothee added—"But the chateau will now be inhabited, and cheerful again; not all the world could tempt me to live in it alone."

"Well, the experiment will not be made, I believe," ſaid the Counteſs, diſpleaſed that her own ſilence had been unable to awe the loquacity of this ruſtic old houſe keeper, now ſpared from further attendance by the entrance of the Count, who ſaid he had been viewing part of the chateau, and found, that it would require conſiderable repairs and ſome alterations, before it would be perfectly comfortable, as a place of reſidence. "I am ſorry to hear it, my lord," replied the Counteſs. "And why ſorry, madam?" "Becauſe the place will ill repay your trouble; and were it even a paradiſe, it would be inſufferable at ſuch a diſtance from Paris."

The Count made no reply, but walked abruptly to a window. "There are windows, my lord, but they neither admit entertainment, or light; they ſhew only a ſcene of ſavage nature."

"I am at a loſs, madam," ſaid the Count, "to conjecture what you mean by ſavage nature. Do thoſe plains, or thoſe woods, or that fine expanſe of water, deſerve the name?"

"Thoſe mountains certainly do, my lord," rejoined the Counteſs, pointing to the Pyrenees, "and this chateau, though not a work of rude nature, is to my taſte, at leaſt one of ſavage art." The Count coloured highly. "This place, madam, was the work of my anceſtors," ſaid he, "and you muſt allow me to ſay, that your preſent converſation diſcovers neither good taſte, or good manners." Blanche, now ſhocked at an altercation, which

appeared to be increaſing to a ſerious diſagreement, roſe to leave the room, when her mother's woman entered it; and the Counteſs immediately deſiring to be ſhewn to her own apartment, withdrew, attended by Mademoiſelle Bearn.

Lady Blanche it being not yet dark, took this opportunity of exploring new ſcenes, and leaving the parlour, ſhe paſſed from the hall into a wide gallery, whoſe walls were decorated by marble pilaſters, which ſupported an arched roof, compoſed of a rich moſaic work. Through a diſtant window, that ſeemed to terminate the gallery, were ſeen the purple clouds of evening and a landſcape, whoſe features, thinly veiled in twilight, no longer appeared diſtinctly, but, blended into one grand maſs, ſtretched to the horizon, coloured only with a tint of ſolemn grey.

The gallery terminated in a ſaloon, to which the window ſhe had ſeen through an open door, belonged; but the increaſing duſk permitted her only an imperfect view of this apartment, which ſeemed to be magnificent and of modern architecture; though it had been either ſuffered to fall into decay, or had never been properly finiſhed. The windows, which were numerous and large, deſcended low, and afforded a very extenſive, and what Blanche's fancy repreſented to be, a very lovely proſpect; and ſhe ſtood for ſometime, ſurveying the grey obſcurity, and depicturing imaginary woods and mountains, vallies and rivers, on this ſcene of night; her ſolemn ſenſations rather aſſiſted, than interrupted, by the diſtant bark of a watch dog, and by the breeze, as it trembled upon the light foliage of the ſhrubs. Now and then appeared for a moment, among the woods, a cottage light; and, at length, was heard, afar off, the evening bell of a convent, dying on the air. When ſhe withdrew her thoughts from theſe ſubjects of fanciful delight, the gloom and ſilence of the ſaloon ſomewhat awed her; and, having ſought the door of the gallery, and purſued, for a conſiderable time, a dark paſſage, ſhe came to a hall, but one totally different from that ſhe had formerly ſeen. By the twilight, admitted through an open portico, ſhe could juſt diſtinguiſh this apartment to be of very light and airy architecture, and that it was paved with white marble, pillars of which ſupported the roof, that roſe into arches built in the Mooriſh ſtyle. While Blanche ſtood on the ſteps of this portico, the moon roſe over the ſea, and gradually diſcloſed, in partial light, the beauties of the eminence, on which ſhe ſtood, whence a lawn, now rude and overgrown with high graſs, ſloped to the woods, that almoſt ſurrounding the chateau, extended in a grand

ſweep down the ſouthern ſides of the promontory to the very margin of the ocean. Beyond the woods, on the north ſide, appeared a long tract of the plains of Languedoc; and to the eaſt, the landſcape ſhe had before dimly ſeen, with the towers of a monaſtery, illumined by the moon, riſing over dark groves.

The ſoft and ſhadowy tint, that overſpread the ſcene, the waves, undulating in the moonlight, and their low and meaſured murmurs on the beach, were circumſtances, that united to elevate the unaccuſtomed mind of Blanche to enthuſiaſm.

"And have I lived in this glorious world ſo long," ſaid ſhe, "and never till now beheld ſuch a proſpect—never experienced theſe delights! Every peaſant girl, on my father's domain, has viewed from her infancy the face of nature; has ranged, at liberty, her romantic wilds, while I have been ſhut in a cloiſter from the view of theſe beautiful appearances, which were deſigned to enchant all eyes, and awaken all hearts. How can the poor nuns and friars feel the full fervour of devotion, if they never ſee the ſun riſe, or ſet? Never, till this evening, did I know what true devotion is; for, never before did I ſee the ſun ſink below the vaſt earth! To-morrow, for the firſt time in my life, I will ſee it riſe. O who would live in Paris, to look upon black walls, and dirty ſtreets, when, in the country, they might gaze on the blue heavens, and all the green earth!"

This enthuſiaſtic ſoliloquy was interrupted by a ruſtling noiſe in the hall; and, while the lonelineſs of the place made her ſenſible to fear, ſhe thought ſhe perceived ſomething moving between the pillars. For a moment ſhe continued ſilently obſerving it, till aſhamed of her ridiculous apprehenſions, ſhe recollected courage enough to demand who was there. "O my young lady, is it you?" ſaid the old houſekeeper, who was come to ſhut the windows, "I am glad it is you." The manner, in which ſhe ſpoke this, with a faint breath, rather ſurpriſed Blanche, who ſaid, "You ſeemed frightened, Dorothee, what is the matter?"

"No, not frightened, ma'amſelle," replied Dorothee, heſitating and trying to appear compoſed, "but I am old, and—a little matter ſtartles me." The Lady Blanche ſmiled at the diſtinction. "I am glad that my lord the Count is come to live at the chateau, ma'amſelle," continued Dorothee, "for it has been many a year deſerted, and dreary enough; now, the place will look a little as it uſed to do, when my poor lady was alive." Blanche inquired how long it was, ſince the Marchioneſs died? "Alas! my lady," repiled Dorothee, "ſo long—that I have

ceaſed to count the years! The place, to my mind has mourned ever ſince, and I am ſure my lord's vaſſals have! But you have loſt yourſelf, ma'amſelle,—ſhall I ſhew you to the other ſide of the chateau?"

Blanche inquired how long this part of the edifice had been built. "Soon after my lord's marriage, ma'am," replied Dorothee. "The place was large enough without this addition, for many rooms of the old building were even then never made uſe of, and my lord had a princely houſehold too; but he thought the ancient manſion gloomy, and gloomy enough it is!" Lady Blanche now deſired to be ſhewn to the inhabited part of the chateau; and, as the paſſages were intirely dark, Dorothee conducted her along the edge of the lawn to the oppoſite ſide of the edifice, where a door opening into the great hall, ſhe was met by Mademoiſelle Bearn. "Where have you been ſo long?" ſaid ſhe, "I had begun to think ſome wonderful adventure had befallen you, and that the giant of this enchanted caſtle, or the ghoſt, which, no doubt, haunts it, had conveyed you through a trap-door into ſome ſubterranean vault, whence you was never to return."

"No," replied Blanche, laughingly, "you ſeem to love adventures ſo well, that I leave them for you to achieve."

"Well, I am willing to achieve them, provided I am allowed to deſcribe them."

"My dear Mademoiſelle Bearn," ſaid Henri, as he met her at the door of the parlour, "no ghoſt of theſe days would be ſo ſavage as to impoſe ſilence on you. Our ghoſts are more civilized than to condemn a lady to a purgatory ſeverer even than their own, be it what it may."

Mademoiſelle Bearn replied only by a laugh; and the Count now entering the room, ſupper was ſerved, during which he ſpoke little, frequently appeared to be abſtracted from the company, and more than once remarked, that the place was greatly altered, ſince he had laſt ſeen it. "Many years have intervened ſince that period," ſaid he; "and, though the grand features of the ſcenery admit of no change, they impreſs me with ſenſations very different from thoſe I formerly experienced."

"Did theſe ſcenes, ſir," ſaid Blanche, "ever appear more lovely, than they do now? To me this ſeems hardly poſſible." The Count, regarding her with a melancholy ſmile, ſaid, they once were as delightful to me, as they are now to you; the landſcape is not changed, but time has changed me; from my mind the illuſion, which gave ſpirit to the colouring of nature, is fading faſt! If you live, my dear Blanche, to reviſit this

ſpot, at the diſtance of many years, you will, perhaps, remember and underſtand the feelings of your father."

Lady Blanche, affected by theſe words, remained ſilent; ſhe looked forward to the period, which the Count anticipated, and conſidering, that he who now ſpoke, would then probably be no more, her eyes bent to the ground, were filled with tears.—She gave her hand to her father, who ſmiling affectionately, roſe from his chair, and went to a window to conceal his emotion.

The fatigues of the day made the party ſeparate at an early hour, when Blanche retired through a long oak gallery to her chamber, whoſe ſpacious and lofty walls, high antiquated caſements, and, what was the effect of theſe, its gloomy air, did not reconcile her to its remote ſituation, in this ancient building. The furniture, alſo, was of ancient date; the bed was of blue damaſk, trimmed with tarniſhed gold lace, and its lofty teſſer roſe in the form of a canopy, whence the curtains deſcended, like thoſe of ſuch tents as are ſometimes repreſented in old pictures, and, indeed, much reſembling thoſe, exhibited on the faded tapeſtry, with which the chamber was hung. To Blanche, every object here was matter of curioſity; and, taking the light from her woman to examine the tapeſtry, ſhe perceived, that it repreſented ſcenes from the wars of Troy, though the almoſt colourleſs worſted now mocked the glowing actions they once had painted. She laughed at the ludicrous abſurdity ſhe obſerved, till recollecting, that the hands, which had wove it, were, like the poet, whoſe thoughts of fire they had attempted to expreſs, long ſince mouldered into duſt, a train of melancholy ideas paſſed over her mind, and ſhe almoſt wept.

Having given her woman a ſtrict injunction to awaken her, before ſunriſe, ſhe diſmiſſed her; and then, to diſſipate the gloom which reflection had caſt upon her ſpirits, opened one of the high caſements, and was again cheered by the face of living nature. The ſhadowy earth, the air, and ocean—all was ſtill. Along the deep ſerene of the heavens, a few light clouds floated ſlowly, through whoſe ſkirts the ſtars now ſeemed to tremble, and now to emerge with purer ſplendour. Blanche's thoughts aroſe involuntarily to the great Author of the ſublime objects ſhe contemplated, and ſhe breathed a prayer of finer devotion, than any ſhe had ever uttered beneath the vaulted roof of a cloiſter. At this caſement, ſhe remained till the glooms of midnight were ſtretched over the proſpect. She then retired to her pillow, and, "with gay viſions of to-morrow," to thoſe ſweet ſlumbers, which health and happy innocence only know.

"To-morrow to freſh woods and paſtures new."

CHAP. XXXVII.

"What tranſport to retrace our early plays,
Our eaſy bliſs, when each thing joy ſupplied,
The woods, the mountains and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks!"

THOMPSON.

BLANCHE's ſlumbers continued, till long after the hour, which ſhe had ſo impatiently anticipated, for her woman, fatigued with travelling, did not call her, till breakfaſt was nearly ready. Her diſappointment, however was inſtantly forgotten, when, on opening the caſement, ſhe ſaw on one hand, the wide ſea ſparkling in the morning rays, with its ſtealing ſails and glancing oars; and on the other, the freſh woods, the plains far ſtretching and the blue mountains, all glowing with the ſplendour of day.

As ſhe inſpired the pure breeze, health ſpread a deeper bluſh upon her countenance, and pleaſure danced in her eyes.

"Who could firſt invent convents!" ſaid ſhe, "and who could firſt perſuade people to go into them? and to make religion a pretence, too, where all that ſhould inſpire it, is ſo carefully ſhut out! God is beſt pleaſed with the homage of a grateful heart, and, when we view his glories, we feel moſt grateful. I never felt ſo much devotion, during the many dull years I was in the convent, as I have done in the few hours that I have been here, where I need only look on all around me, to adore God in my inmoſt heart."

Saying this, ſhe left the window, bounded along the gallery, and, in the next moment, was in the breakfaſt room, where the Count was already ſeated. The cheerfulneſs of a bright ſunſhine had diſperſed the melancholy glooms of his reflections, a pleaſant ſmile was on his countenance, and he ſpoke in an enlivening voice to Blanche, whoſe heart echoed back the tones. Henri and, ſoon after, the Counteſs with Mademoiſelle Bearn appeared, and the whole party ſeemed to acknowledge the influence of the ſcene; even the Counteſs was ſo much reanimated as to receive the civilities of her huſband with complacency, and but once forgot her good humour, which was when ſhe aſked whether they had any neighbours, who were likely to make *this barbarous ſpot* more tolerable, and whether the Count believed it poſſible for her to exiſt here, without ſome amuſement?"

Soon after breakfaſt the party diſperſed; the Count, ordering his ſteward to attend him in the library, went to ſurvey the condition of his premiſes, and to viſit ſome of his tenants; Henri haſtened with alacrity to the ſhore to examine a boat, that was to bear them on a little voyage in the evening and to ſuperintend the adjuſtment of a ſilk awning; while the Counteſs, attended by Mademoiſelle Bearn, retired to an apartment on the modern ſide of the chateau, which was fitted up with airy elegance; and, as the windows opened upon balconies, that fronted the ſea, ſhe was there ſaved from a view of the *horrid* Pyrenees. Here, while ſhe reclined on a ſofa, and, caſting her languid eyes over the ocean, which appeared beyond the wood tops, indulged in the luxuries of *ennui*, her companion read aloud a ſentimental novel, on ſome faſhionable ſyſtem of philoſophy, for the Counteſs was herſelf ſomewhat of a *philoſopher*, eſpecially as to *infidelity*, and among a certain circle her opinions were waited for with impatience, and received as doctrines.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, haſtened to indulge, amidſt the wild wood walks around the chateau, her new enthuſiaſm, where, as ſhe wandered under the ſhades, her gay ſpirits gradually yielded to penſive complacency. Now, ſhe moved with ſolemn ſteps, beneath the gloom of thickly interwoven branches, where the freſh dew ſtill hung upon every flower, that peeped from among the graſs; and now tripped ſportively along the path, on which the ſunbeams darted and the checquered foliage trembled—where the tender greens of the beech, the acacia and the mountain aſh, mingling with the ſolemn tints of the cedar, the pine and cypreſs, exhibited as fine a contraſt of colouring, as the majeſtic oak and oriental plane did of form, to the feathery lightneſs of the cork tree and the waving grace of the poplar.

Having reached a ruſtic ſeat, within a deep receſs of the woods, ſhe reſted awhile, and, as her eyes caught, through a diſtant opening, a glimpſe of the blue waters of the Mediterranean, with the white ſail, gliding on its boſom, or of the broad mountain, glowing beneath the mid-day ſun, her mind experienced ſomewhat of that exquiſite delight, which awakens the fancy, and leads to poetry. The hum of bees alone broke the ſtillneſs around her, as, with other inſects of various hues, they ſported gaily in the ſhade, or ſipped ſweets from the freſh flowers; and, while Blanche watched a butterfly, flitting from bud to bud, ſhe indulged herſelf in imagining the pleaſures of its ſhort day, till ſhe had compoſed the following ſtanzas.

THE BUTTERFLY TO HIS LOVE.

What bowery dell, with fragrant breath,
Courts thee to ſtay thy airy flight;
Nor ſeek again the purple heath,
So oft the ſcene of gay delight.

Long I've watch'd i' the lily's bell,
Whoſe whiteneſs ſtole the morning's beam;
No fluttering ſounds thy coming tell,
No waving wings, at diſtance, gleam.

But fountain freſh, nor breathing grove,
Nor ſunny mead, nor bloſſom'd tree,
So ſweet as lily's cell ſhall prove,—
The bower of conſtant love and me.

When April buds begin to blow,
The primroſe, and the hare-bell blue,
That on the verdant moſs bank grow,
With violet cups, that weep in dew;

When wanton gales breathe through the ſhade,
And ſhake the blooms, and ſteal their ſweets,
And ſwell the ſong of ev'ry glade,
I range the foreſt's green retreats:

There, through the tangled wood walks play,
Where no rude urchin paces near,
Where ſparely peeps the ſultry day,
And light dews freſhen all the air.

High on a ſunbeam oft I ſport
O'er bower and fountain, vale and hill;
Oft ev'ry bluſhing flow'ret court,
That hangs its head o'er winding rill.

But theſe I'll leave to be thy guide,
And ſhew thee, where the jaſmine ſpreads
Her ſnowy leaf, where May-flow'rs hide
And roſe-buds rear their peeping heads.

With me the mountain's ſummit ſcale,
And taſte the wild-thyme's honied bloom,
Whoſe fragrance, floating on the gale,
Oft leads me to the cedar's gloom.

Yet, yet, no ſound comes in the breeze!
What ſhade thus dares to tempt thy ſtay?

Once, me alone thou wiſh'd to pleaſe,
And with me only thou wouldſt ſtray.

But, while thy long delay I mourn,
And chide the ſweet ſhades for their guile,
Thou may'ſt be true and t ey forlorn,
And fairy favours court thy ſmile.

The tiny queen of fairy-land,
Who knows thy ſpe d, hath ſent thee far,
To bring, or ere the night watch ſtand,
Rich eſſence for her ſhadowy car:

Perchance her acorn-cups to fill
With nectar from the Indian roſe,
Or gather, near ſome haunted rill,
May-dews, that lull to ſleep Love's woes:

Or o'er the mountains, bade thee fly,
To tell her fairy love to ſpeed,
When ev'ning ſteals upon the ſky,
To dance along the twilight mead.

But now I ſee thee ſailing low,
Gay as the brighteſt flow'rs of ſpring,
Thy coat of blue and jet I know,
And well thy gold and purple wing.

Borne on the gale, thou com'ſt to me;
O! welcome, welcome to my home!
In lily's cell we'll live in glee,
Together o'er the mountains roam!

When Lady Blanche returned to the chateau, inſtead of going to the apartment of the Counteſs, ſhe amuſed herſelf with wandering over that part of the edifice, which ſhe had not yet examined, of which the moſt ancient firſt attracted her curioſity; for though what ſhe had ſeen of the modern, was gay and elegant, there was ſomething in the former more intereſting to her imagination. Having paſſed up the great ſtaircaſe, and through the oak gallery, ſhe entered upon a long ſuite of chambers, whoſe walls were either hung with tapeſtry, or wainſcoted with cedar, the furniture of which looked almoſt as ancient as the rooms themſelves; the ſpacious fire places, where no mark of ſocial cheer remained, preſented an image of cold deſolation; and the whole ſuite had ſo much the air of neglect and deſertion, that it ſeemed, as if the venerable perſons, whoſe portraits hung upon the walls, had been the laſt to inhabit them.

On leaving theſe rooms, ſhe found herſelf in another gallery, one end of which was terminated by a back ſtaircaſe, and the other by a door, that ſeemed to communicate with the north ſide of the chateau, but which being faſtened, ſhe deſcended the ſtaircaſe, and opening a door in the wall, a few ſteps down, found herſelf in a ſmall ſquare room, that formed part of the weſt turret of the caſtle. Three windows preſented each a ſeparate and beautiful proſpect; that to the north overlooking Languedoc; another to the weſt, the hills aſcending towards the Pyrenees, whoſe awful ſummits crowned the landſcape; and a third, fronting the ſouth, gave the Mediterranean, and a part of the wild ſhores of Rouſillon, to the eye.

Having left the turret, and deſcended the narrow ſtaircaſe, ſhe found herſelf in a duſky paſſage, where ſhe wandered, unable to find her way, till impatience yielded to apprehenſion, and ſhe called for aſſiſtance. Preſently ſteps approached, and light glimmered through a door at the other extremity of the paſſage, which was opened with caution by ſome perſon, who did not venture beyond it, and whom Blanche obſerved in ſilence, till the door was cloſing, when ſhe called aloud, and haſtening towards it, perceived the old houſekeeper.

"Dear ma'amſelle! is it you?" ſaid Dorothee, "How could you find your way hither?" Had Blanche been leſs occupied by her own fears, ſhe would probably have obſerved the ſtrong expreſſions of terror and ſurpriſe on Dorothee's countenance, who now led her through a long ſucceſſion of paſſages and rooms, that looked as if they had been uninhabited for a century, till they reached that appropriated to the houſekeeper, where Dorothee entreated ſhe would ſit down and take refreſhment. Blanche accepted the ſweet meats, offered to her, mentioned her diſcovery of the pleaſant turret, and her wiſh to appropriate it to her own uſe. Whether Dorothee's taſte was not ſo ſenſible to the beauties of landſcape as her young lady's, or that the conſtant view of lovely ſcenery had deadened it, ſhe forbore to praiſe the ſubject of Blanche's enthuſiaſm, which, however, her ſilence did not repreſs. To Lady Blanche's inquiry, of whither the door ſhe had found faſtened at the end of the gallery led, ſhe replied, that it opened to a ſuite of rooms, which had not been entered, during many years, "For," added ſhe, "my late lady died in one of them, and I could never find in my heart to go into them ſince."

Blanche, though ſhe wiſhed to ſee theſe chambers, forbore, on obſerving that Dorothee's eyes were filled with tears, to aſk her to unlock them, and, ſoon after, went to dreſs for dinner, at

which the whole party met in good ſpirits and good humour, except the Counteſs, whoſe vacant mind, overcome by the languor of idleneſs, would neither ſuffer her to be happy herſelf, or to contribute to the happineſs of others. Mademoiſelle Bearn, attempting to be witty, directed her *badinage* againſt Henri, who anſwered, becauſe he could not well avoid it, rather than from any inclination to notice her, whoſe livelineſs ſometimes amuſed, but whoſe conceit and inſenſibility often diſguſted him.

The cheerfulneſs, with which Blanche rejoined the party, vaniſhed, on her reaching the margin of the ſea; ſhe gazed with apprehenſion upon the immenſe expanſe of waters, which, at a diſtance, ſhe had beheld only with delight and aſtoniſhment, and it was by a ſtrong effort, that ſhe ſo far overcame her fears, as to follow her father into the boat.

As ſhe ſilently ſurveyed the vaſt horizon, bending round the diſtant verge of the ocean, an emotion of ſublimeſt rapture ſtruggled to overcome a ſenſe of perſonal danger. A light breeze played on the water, and on the ſilk awning of the boat, and waved the foliage of the receding woods, that crowned the cliffs, for many miles, and which the Count ſurveyed with the pride of conſcious property, as well as with the eye of taſte.

At ſome diſtance, among theſe woods, ſtood a pavilion, which had once been the ſcene of ſocial gaiety, and which its ſituation ſtill made one of romantic beauty. Thither, the Count had ordered coffee and other refreſhment to be carried, and thither the ſailors now ſteered their courſe, following the windings of the ſhore round many a woody promontory and circling bay; while the penſive tones of horns and other wind inſtruments, played by the attendants in a diſtant boat, echoed among the rocks, and died along the waves. Blanche had now ſubdued her fears; a delightful tranquillity ſtole over her mind, and held her in ſilence; and ſhe was too happy even to remember the convent, or her former ſorrows, as ſubjects of compariſon with her preſent felicity.

The Counteſs felt leſs unhappy than ſhe had done, ſince the moment of her leaving Paris; for her mind was now under ſome degree of reſtraint; ſhe feared to indulge its wayward humours, and even wiſhed to recover the Count's good opinion. On his family, and on the ſurrounding ſcene, he looked with tempered pleaſure and benevolent ſatisfaction, while his ſon exhibited the gay ſpirits of youth, anticipating new delights, and regretleſs of thoſe, that were paſſed.

After near an hour's rowing, the party landed and aſcended a little path, overgrown with vegetation. At a little diſtance from

the point of the eminence, within the ſhadowy receſs of the woods, appeared the pavilion, which Blanche perceived, as ſhe caught a glimſe of its portico between the trees, to be built of variegated marble. As ſhe followed the Counteſs, ſhe often turned her eyes with rapture towards the ocean, ſeen beneath the dark foliage, far below, and from thence upon the deep woods, whoſe ſilence and impenetrable gloom awakened emotions more ſolemn but ſcarcely leſs delightful.

The pavilion had been prepared, as far as was poſſible, on a very ſhort notice, for the reception of its viſitors but the faded colours of its painted walls and ceiling, and the decayed drapery of its once magnificent furniture, declared how long it had been neglected, and abandoned to the empire of the changing ſeaſons. While the party partook of a collation of fruit and coffee, the horns placed in a diſtant part of the woods, where an echo ſweetened and prolonged their melancholy tones, broke ſoftly on the ſtillneſs of the ſcene. This ſpot ſeemed to attract even the admiration of the Counteſs, or, perhaps, it was merely the pleaſure of planning furniture and decorations, that made her dwell ſo long on the neceſſity of repairing and adorning it; while the Count, never happier than when he ſaw her mind engaged by natural and ſimple objects, acquieſced in all her deſigns concerning the pavilion.

The paintings on the walls and coved ceiling were to be renewed; the canopies and ſofas were to be of light green damaſk; marble ſtatues of wood nymphs, bearing on their heads baſkets of living flowers, were to adorn the receſſes between the windows, which, deſcending to the ground, were to admit to every part of the room, and it was of octagonal form, the various landſcape. One window opened upon a romantic glade, where the eye roved among woody receſſes, and the ſcene was bounded only by a lengthened pomp of groves; from another, the woods receding diſcloſed the diſtant ſummits of the Pyrenees; a third fronted an avenue, beyond which the grey towers of Chateu-le-Blanc, and a picturesque part of its ruin were ſeen partially among the foliage; while a fourth gave between the trees, a glimpſe of the green paſtures and villages, that diverſify the banks of the Aude. The Mediterranean, with the bold cliffs, that overlooked its ſhores, were the grand objects of a fifth window, and the others gave in different points of view, the wild ſcenery of the woods.

After wandering, for ſometime, in theſe the party returned to the ſhore and embarked; and, the beauty of the evening

tempting them to extend their excurſion, they proceeded further up the bay. A dead calm had ſucceeded the light breeze, that wafted them hither, and the men took to their oars. Around, the waters were ſpread into one vaſt expanſe of poliſhed mirror, reflecting the grey cliffs and feathery woods, that overhung its ſurface, the glow of the weſtern horizon and the dark clouds, that came ſlowly from the eaſt. Blanche loved to ſee the dipping oars imprint the water, and to watch the ſpreading circles they left, which gave a tremulous motion to the reflected landſcape, without deſtroying the harmony of its features.

Above the darkneſs of the woods, her eye now caught a cluſter of high towers, touched with the ſplendour of the ſetting rays; and ſoon after, the horns being then ſilent, ſhe heard the faint ſwell of choral voices from a diſtance.

"What voices are thoſe, upon the air?" ſaid the Count, looking round, and liſtening; but the ſtrain had ceaſed. "It ſeemed to be a veſper hymn, which I have often heard in my convent," ſaid Blanche.

"We are near the monaſtery, then," obſerved the Count; and, the boat ſoon after doubling a lofty head land, the monaſtery of St. Claire, appeared, ſeated near the margin of the ſea, where the cliffs ſuddenly ſinking, formed a low ſhore within a ſmall bay, almoſt encircled with woods, among which partial features of the edifice were ſeen; the great gate and gothic window of the hall, the cloiſters and the ſide of a chapel more remote; while a venerable arch, which had once led to a part of the fabric, now demoliſhed, ſtood a majeſtic ruin detached from the main building, beyond which appeared a grand perſpective of the woods. On the grey walls, the moſs had faſtened, and, round the pointed windows of the chapel, the ivy and the briony hung in many a fantaſtic wreath.

All without was ſilent and forſaken; but while Blanche gazed with admiration on this venerable pile, whoſe effect was heightened by the ſtrong lights and ſhadows thrown athwart it by a cloudy ſunſet, a ſound of many voices, ſlowly chanting, aroſe from within. The Count bade his men reſt on their oars. The monks were ſinging the hymn of veſpers, and ſome female voices mingled with the ſtrain, which roſe by ſoft degrees, till the high organ and the choral ſounds ſwelled into full and ſolemn harmony. The ſtrain, ſoon after, dropped into ſudden ſilence, and was renewed in a low and ſtill more ſolemn key, till, at length, the holy chorus died away, and was heard no more.—Blanche ſighed, tears trembled in her eyes, and her thoughts

ſeemed wafted with the ſounds to heaven. While a rapt ſtillneſs prevailed in the boat, a train of friars, and then of nuns, veiled in white, iſſued from the cloiſters, and paſſed under the ſhade of the woods, to the main body of the edifice.

The Counteſs was the firſt of her party to awaken from this pauſe of ſilence.

"Theſe diſmal hymns and friars make one quite melancholy," ſaid ſhe; "twilight is coming on; pray let us return, or it will be dark before we get home."

The Count, looking up, now perceived, that the twilight of evening was anticipated by an approaching ſtorm. In the eaſt a tempeſt was collecting; a heavy gloom came on, oppoſing and contraſting the glowing ſplendour of the ſetting ſun. The clamourous ſea fowl ſkimmed in fleet circles upon the ſurface of the ſea, dipping their light pinions in the wave, as they fled away in ſearch of ſhelter. The boatmen pulled hard at their oars; but the thunder, that now muttered at a diſtance, and the heavy drops that began to dimple the water, made the Count determine to put back to the monaſtery for ſhelter and the courſe of the boat was immediately changed. As the clouds approached the weſt, their lurid darkneſs changed to a deep ruddy glow, which, by reflection, ſeemed to fire the tops of the woods and the ſhattered towers of the monaſtery.

The appearance of the heavens alarmed the Counteſs and Mademoiſelle Bearn, whoſe expreſſions of apprehenſion diſtreſſed the Count, and perplexed his men; while Blanche continued ſilent, now agitated with fear, and now with admiration, as ſhe viewed the grandeur of the clouds, and their effect on the ſcenery, and liſtened to the long, long peals of thunder, that rolled through the air.

The boat having reached the lawn before the monaſtery, the Count ſent a ſervant to announce his arrival, and to entreat ſhelter of the Superior, who, ſoon after, appeared at the great gate, attended by ſeveral monks, while the ſervant returned with a meſſage, expreſſive at once of hoſpitality and pride, but of pride diſguiſed in ſubmiſſion. The party immediately diſembarked, and, having haſtily croſſed the lawn—for the ſhower was now heavy—were received at the gate by the Superior, who, as they entered, ſtretched forth his hands and gave his bleſſing; and they paſſed into the great hall, were the lady abbeſs waited, attended by ſeveral nuns, clothed, like herſelf, in black, and veiled in white. The veil of the abbeſs was, however, thrown half back,

and diſcovered a countenance, whoſe chaſte dignity was ſweetened by the ſmile of welcome, with which ſhe addreſſed the Counteſs, whom ſhe led, with Blanche and Mademoiſelle Bearn, into the convent parlour, while the Count and Henri were conducted by the Superior to the refectory.

The Counteſs, fatigued and diſcontented, received the politeneſs of the Abbeſs with careleſs haughtineſs, and had followed her with indolent ſteps to the parlour, over which the painted caſements and wainſcot of larch-wood threw, at all times, a melancholy ſhade, and where the gloom of evening now loured almoſt to darkneſs.

While the lady Abbeſs ordered refreſhment, and converſed with the Counteſs, Blanche withdrew to a window, the lower panes of which, being without painting allowed her to obſerve the progreſs of the ſtorm over the Mediterranean, whoſe dark waves that had ſo lately ſlept, now came boldly ſwelling, in long ſucceſſion, to the ſhore, where they burſt in white foam, and threw up a high ſpray over the rocks. A red ſulphurous tint overſpread the long line of clouds, that hung above the weſtern horizon, beneath whoſe dark ſkirts the ſun looking out, illumined the diſtant ſhores of Languedoc, as well as the tufted ſummits of the nearer woods, and ſhed a partial gleam on the weſtern waves. The reſt of the ſcene was in deep gloom, except where a ſunbeam, darting between the clouds, glanced on the white wings of the ſea-fowl, that circled high among them, or touched the ſwelling ſail of a veſſel, which was ſeen labouring in the ſtorm. Blanche, for ſometime, anxiouſly watched the progreſs of the bark, as it threw the waves in foam around it, and, as the lightnings flaſhed, looked to the opening heavens, with many a ſigh for the fate of the poor mariners.

The ſun, at length, ſet, and the heavy clouds, which had long impended, dropped over the ſplendour of his courſe; the veſſel, however, was yet dimly ſeen, and Blanche continued to obſerve it, till the quick ſucceſſion of flaſhes, lighting up the gloom of the whole horizon, warned her to retire from the window, and ſhe joined the Abbeſs, who having exhauſted all her topics of converſation with the Counteſs, had now leiſure to notice her.

But their diſcourſe was interrupted by tremenduous peals of thunder; and the bell of the monaſtery ſoon after ringing out, ſummoned the inhabitants to prayer. As Blanche paſſed the windows ſhe gave another look to the ocean, where, by the momentary flaſh, that illumined the vaſt body of the waters, ſhe diſtinguiſhed the veſſel ſhe had obſerved before, amidſt a ſea of

foam, breaking the billows, the maſts now bowing to the waves, and then riſing high in air.

She ſighed fervently as ſhe gazed, and then followed the Lady Abbeſs and the Counteſs to the chapel. Meanwhile, ſome of the Count's ſervants, having gone by land to the chateau for carriages, returned ſoon after veſpers had concluded, when, the ſtorm being ſomewhat abated, the Count and his family returned home. Blanche was ſurpriſed to diſcover how much the windings of the ſhore had deceived her, concerning the diſtance of the chateau from the monaſtery, whoſe veſper bell ſhe had heard, on the preceding evening, from the windows of the weſt ſaloon, and whoſe towers ſhe would alſo have ſeen from thence, had not twilight veiled them.

On their arrival at the chateau, the Counteſs affecting more fatigue than ſhe really felt, withdrew to her apartment, and the Count, with his daughter and Henri, went to the ſupper room, where they had not been long, when they heard, in a pauſe of the guſt, a firing of guns, which the Count underſtanding to be ſignals of diſtreſs from ſome veſſel in the ſtorm, went to a window that opened towards the Mediterranean, to obſerve further; but the ſea was now involved in utter darkneſs, and the loud howlings of the tempeſt had again overcome every other ſound. Blanche, remembering the bark, which ſhe had before ſeen, now joined her father, with trembling anxiety. In a few moments, the report of guns was again borne along the wind, and as ſuddenly wafted away; a tremendous burſt of thunder followed, and, in the flaſh, that had preceded it, and which ſeemed to quiver over the whole ſurface of the waters, a veſſel was diſcovered, toſſing amidſt the white foam of the waves at ſome diſtance from the ſhore. Impenetrable darkneſs again involved the ſcene, but ſoon a ſecond flaſh ſhewed the bark with one ſail unfurled, driving towards the coaſt. Blanche hung upon her father's arm, with looks full of the agony of united terror and pity, which were unneceſſary to awaken the heart of the Count, who gazed upon the ſea with a piteous expreſſion, and, perceiving that no boat could live in the ſtorm, forbore to ſend one; but he gave orders to his people to carry torches out upon the cliffs, hoping they might prove a kind of beacon to the veſſel, or, at leaſt, warn the crew of the rocks they were approaching. While Henri went out to direct on what part of the cliffs the lights ſhould appear, Blanche remained, with her father at the window, catching every now and then, as the lightnings flaſhed, a glimpſe of the veſſel; and ſhe ſoon ſaw, with reviving hope, the torches flaming on the

blackneſs of night, and, as they waved over the cliffs, caſting a red gleam on the gaſping billows. When the firing of guns was repeated, the torches were toſſed high in the air, as if anſwering the ſignal, and the firing was then redoubled; but, though the wind bore the ſound away, ſhe fancied, as the lightnings glanced, that the veſſel was much nearer the ſhore.

The Count's ſervants were now ſeen, running to and fro, on the rocks; ſome venturing almoſt to the point of the crags, and bending over, held out their torches faſtened to long poles; while others, whoſe ſteps could be traced only by the courſe of the lights, deſcended the ſteep and dangerous path, that wound to the margin of the ſea, and with loud halloos hailed the mariners, whoſe ſhrill whiſtle, and then feeble voices, were heard at intervals, mingling with the ſtorm. Sudden ſhouts from the people on the rocks increaſed the anxiety of Blanche to an almoſt intolerable degree: but her ſuſpenſe, concerning the fate of the mariners, was ſoon over, when Henri, running breathleſs into the room, told that the veſſel was anchored in the bay below, but in ſo ſhattered a condition, that it was feared ſhe would part before the crew could diſembark. The Count immediately gave orders for his own boats to aſſiſt in bringing them to ſhore, and that ſuch of theſe unfortunate ſtrangers as could not be accommodated in the adjacent hamlet ſhould be entertained at the chateau. Among the latter, were Emily St. Aubert, Monſieur Du Pont, Ludovico and Annette, who, having embarked at Leghorn and reached Marſeilles, were from thence croſſing the Gulph of Lyons, when this ſtorm overtook them. They were received by the Count with his uſual benignity, who, though Emily wiſhed to have proceeded immediately to the monaſtery of St. Claire, would not allow her to leave the chateau, that night; and, indeed, the terror and fatigue ſhe had ſuffered would ſcarcely have permitted her to go farther.

In Monſieur Du Pont the Count diſcovered an old acquaintance, and much joy and congratulation paſſed between them, after which Emily was introduced by name to the Count's family, whoſe hoſpitable benevolence diſſipated the little embarraſſment, which her ſituation had occaſioned her, and the party were ſoon ſeated at the ſupper table. The unaffected kindneſs of Blanche and the lively joy ſhe expreſſed on the eſcape of the ſtrangers, for whom her pity had been ſo much intereſted, gradually revived Emily's languid ſpirits; and Du Pont, relieved from his terrors for her and for himſelf, felt the full contraſt, between his late ſituation on a dark and tremendous ocean, and

his preſent one, in a cheerful manſion, where he was ſurrounded with plenty, elegance and ſmiles of welcome.

Annette, meanwhile, in the ſervants' hall, was telling of all the dangers ſhe had encountered, and congratulating herſelf ſo heartily upon her own and Ludovico's eſcape, and on her preſent comforts, that ſhe often made all that part of the chateau ring with merriment and laughter. Ludovico's ſpirits were as gay as her own, but he had diſcretion enough to reſtrain them, and tried to check hers, though in vain, till her laughter, at length, aſcended to *my lady's* chamber, who ſent to inquire what occaſioned ſo much uproar in the chateau, and to command ſilence.

Emily withdrew early to ſeek the repoſe ſhe ſo much required, but her pillow was long a ſleepleſs one. On this her return to her native country, many intereſting remembrances were awakened; all the events and ſufferings ſhe had experienced, ſince ſhe quitted it, came in long ſucceſſion to her fancy, and were chaſed only by the image of Valancourt, with whom to believe herſelf once more in the ſame land, after they had been ſo long, and ſo diſtantly ſeparated, gave her emotions of indeſcribable joy, but which afterwards yielded to anxiety and apprehenſion, when ſhe conſidered the long period, that had elapſed, ſince any letter had paſſed between them, and how much might have happened in this interval to affect her future peace. But the thought, that Valancourt might be now no more, or, if living, might have forgotten her, was ſo very terrible to her heart, that ſhe would ſcarcely ſuffer herſelf to pauſe upon the poſſibility. She determined to inform him, on the following day, of her arrival in France, which it was ſcarcely poſſible he could know but by a letter from herſelf, and after ſoothing her ſpirits with the hope of ſoon hearing, that he was well, and unchanged in his affections, ſhe, at length, ſunk to repoſe.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

"Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia, ſilver-bright,
In cloiſters dim, far from the haunts of folly,
With freedom by my ſide, and ſoft ey'd melancholy."

GRAY.

THE Lady Blanche was ſo much intereſted for Emily, that, upon hearing ſhe was going to reſide in the neighbouring convent, ſhe requeſted the Count would invite her to lengthen her ſtay at the chateau. "And you know my dear ſir," added Blanche, "how delighted I ſhall be with ſuch a companion; for, at preſent, I have no friend to walk, or to read with, ſince Mademoiſelle Bearn is my mamma's friend only."

The Count ſmiled at the youthful ſimplicity, with which his daughter yielded to firſt impreſſions; and, though he choſe to warn her of their danger, he ſilently applauded the benevolence, that could thus readily expand in confidence to a ſtranger. He had obſerved Emily, with attention, on the preceding evening and was as much pleaſed with her, as it was poſſible he could be with any perſon, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance. The mention, made of her by Monſ. Du Pont, had alſo given him a favourable impreſſion of Emily; but, extremely cautious as to thoſe, whom he introduced to the intimacy of his daughter, he determined, on hearing that the former was no ſtranger at the convent of St. Claire, to viſit the Abbeſs, and, if her account correſponded with his wiſh, to invite Emily to paſs ſometime at the chateau. On this ſubject, he was influenced by a conſideration of the Lady Blanche's welfare, ſtill more than by either a wiſh to oblige her, or to befriend the orphan Emily, for whom, however, he felt conſiderably intereſted.

On the following morning, Emily was too much fatigued to appear; but Monſ. Du Pont was at the breakfaſt table, when the Count entered the room, who preſſed him as his former acquaintance, and the ſon of a very old friend, to prolong his ſtay at the chateau; an invitation, which Du Pont willingly accepted, ſince it would allow him to be near Emily; and, though he was not conſcious of encouraging a hope that ſhe would ever return his affection, he had not fortitude enough to attempt, at preſent, to overcome it.

Emily, when ſhe was ſomewhat recovered, wandered with her new friend over the grounds belonging to the chateau, as much delighted with the ſurrounding views, as Blanche, in the

benevolence of her heart, had wiſhed; from thence ſhe perceived, beyond the woods, the towers of the monaſtery, and remarked, that it was to this convent ſhe deſigned to go.

"Ah!" ſaid Blanche with ſurpriſe, "I am but juſt releaſed from a convent, and would you go into one? If you could know what pleaſure I feel in wandering here, at liberty,—and in ſeeing the ſky and the fields, and the woods all round me, I think you would not." Emily, ſmiling at the warmth, with which the Lady Blanche ſpoke, obſerved, that ſhe did not mean to confine herſelf to a convent for life.

"No, you may not intend it now," ſaid Blanche; but you do not know to what the nuns may perſuade you to conſent: I know how kind they will appear, and how happy, for I have ſeen too much of their art."

When they returned to the chateau, Lady Blanche conducted Emily to her favourite turret, and from thence they rambled through the ancient chambers, which Blanche had viſited before. Emily was amuſed by obſerving the ſtructure of theſe apartments, and the faſhion of their old but ſtill magnificent furniture, and by comparing them with thoſe of the caſtle of Udolpho, which were yet more antique and groteſque. She was alſo intereſted by Dorothee the houſe keeper, who attended them, whoſe appearance was almoſt as antique as the objects around her, and who ſeemed no leſs intereſted by Emily, on whom ſhe frequently gazed with ſo much deep attention, as ſcarcely to hear what was ſaid to her.

While Emily looked from one of the caſements, ſhe perceived, with ſurpriſe, ſome objects, that were familiar to her memory; —the fields and woods, with the gleaming brook, which ſhe had paſſed with La Voiſin, one evening, ſoon after the death of Monſieur St. Aubert, in her way from the monaſtery to her cottage; and ſhe now knew this to be the chateau, which he had then avoided, and concerning which he had dropped ſome remarkable hints.

Shocked by this diſcovery, yet ſcarcely knowing why, ſhe muſed for ſometime in ſilence, and remembered the emotion, which her father had betrayed on finding himſelf ſo near this manſion, and ſome other circumſtances of his conduct, that now greatly intereſted her. The muſic, too, which ſhe had formerly heard, and, reſpecting which La Voiſin had given ſuch an odd account, occurred to her, and, deſirous of knowing more concerning it, ſhe aſked Dorothee whether it returned at midnight as uſual, and whether the muſician had yet been diſcovered,

"Yes, ma'amſelle," replied Dorothee, "That muſic is ſtill heard, but the muſician has never been found out, nor ever will, I believe; though there are ſome people who can gueſs."

"Indeed!" ſaid Emily, "then why do they not purſue the inquiry?"

"Ah, young lady! inquiry enough has been made—but who can purſue a ſpirit?"

Emily ſmiled, and, remembering how lately ſhe had ſuffered herſelf to be led away by ſuperſtition, determined now to reſiſt its contagion; yet, in ſpight of her efforts, ſhe felt awe mingle with her curioſity, on this ſubject; and Blanche, who had hitherto liſtened in ſilence, now inquired what this muſic was, and how long it had been heard.

"Ever ſince the death of my lady, madam," replied Dorothee.

"Why the place is not haunted, ſurely?" ſaid Blanche, between jeſting and ſerioufneſs.

"I have heard that muſic almoſt ever ſince my dear lady died," continued Dorothee, "and never before then. But that is nothing to ſome things I could tell of."

"Do, pray, tell them, then," ſaid Lady Blanche, now more in earneſt than in jeſt. "I am much intereſted, for I have heard ſiſter Henriette, and ſiſter Sophie, in the convent, tell of ſuch ſtrange appearances, which they themſelves had witneſſed!"

"You never heard, my lady, I ſuppoſe, what made us leave the chateau, and go and live in a cottage," ſaid Dorothee.

"Never!" replied Blanche with impatience.

"Nor the reaſon, that my lord, the Marquis"—Dorothee checked herſelf, heſitated, and then endeavoured to change the topic; but the curioſity of Blanche was too much awakened to ſuffer the ſubject thus eaſily to eſcape her, and ſhe preſſed the old houſe keeper to proceed with her account, upon whom, however, no entreaties could prevail; and it was evident, that ſhe was alarmed for the imprudence, into which ſhe had already betrayed herſelf.

"I perceive," ſaid Emily, ſmiling, "that all old manſions are haunted; I am lately come from a place of wonders; but unluckily, ſince I left it, I have heard almoſt all of them explained."

Blanche was ſilent; Dorothee looked grave, and ſighed; and Emily felt herſelf ſtill inclined to believe more of the wonderful, than ſhe choſe to acknowledge. Juſt then, ſhe remembered the ſpectacle ſhe had witneſſed in a chamber of Udolpho, and, by an odd kind of coincidence, the alarming words, that had accidentally met her eye in the MS. papers, which ſhe had deſtroyed, in obedience to the command of her father; and ſhe ſhuddered at

the meaning they ſeemed to impart, almoſt as much as at the horrible appearance diſcloſed by the black veil.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, unable to prevail with Dorothee to explain the ſubject of her late hints, had deſired, on reaching the door, that terminated the gallery, and which ſhe found faſtened on the preceding day, to ſee the ſuite of rooms beyond. "Dear young lady," ſaid the houſekeeper, "I have told you my reaſon for not opening them; I have never ſeen them, ſince my dear lady died; and it would go hard with me to ſee them now. Pray, madam, do not aſk me again."

"Certainly I will not," replied Blanche, "if that is really your objection."

"Alas! it is," ſaid the old woman, "we all loved her well, and I ſhall always grieve for her. Time runs round! it is now many years ſince ſhe died; but I remember every thing, that happened then, as if it was but yeſterday. Many things, that have paſſed of late years, are gone quite from my memory, while, thoſe ſo long ago, I can ſee as if in a glaſs." She pauſed, but afterwards, as they walked up the gallery, added of Emily, "This young lady ſometimes brings the late Marchioneſs to my mind; I can remember, when ſhe looked juſt as blooming, and very like her, when ſhe ſmiles. Poor lady! how gay ſhe was, when ſhe firſt came to the chateau!"

"And was ſhe not gay afterwards?" ſaid Blanche.

Dorothee ſhook her head; and Emily obſerved her, with eyes ſtrongly expreſſive of the intereſt ſhe now felt. "Let us ſit down in this window," ſaid the Lady Blanche, on reaching the oppoſite end of the gallery: "and pray, Dorothee, if it is not painful to you, tell us ſomething more about the Marchioneſs. I ſhould like to look into the glaſs you ſpoke of juſt now, and ſee a few of the circumſtances, which you ſay often paſs over it."

"No, my lady," replied Dorothee; "if you knew as much as I do, you would not, for you would find there a diſmal train of them; I often wiſh I could ſhut them out, but they will riſe to my mind. I ſee my dear lady on her death bed,—her very look,—and remember all ſhe ſaid—it was a terrible ſcene!"

"Why was it ſo terrible?" ſaid Emily with emotion.

"Ah, dear young lady! is not death always terrible?" replied Dorothee.

To ſome further inquiries of Blanche Dorothee was ſilent; and Emily, obſerving the tears in her eye, forbore to urge the ſubject, and endeavoured to withdraw the attention of her young friend to ſome object in the gardens, where the Count, with the

Counteſs and Monſieur Du Pont, appearing, they went down to join them.

When he perceived Emily, he advanced to meet her, and preſented her to the Counteſs, in a manner ſo benign, that it recalled moſt powerfully to her mind the idea of her late father, and ſhe felt more gratitude to him, than embarraſſment towards the Counteſs, who, however, received her with one of thoſe faſcinating ſmiles, which her caprice ſometimes allowed her to aſſume, and which were now the reſult of a converſation the Count had held with her concerning Emily. Whatever this might be, or whatever had paſſed in his converſation with the lady Abbeſs, whom he had juſt viſited, eſteem and kindneſs were ſtrongly apparent in his manner, when he addreſſed Emily, who experienced that ſweet emotion, which ariſes from the conſciouſneſs of poſſeſſing the approbation of the good; for to the Count's worth ſhe had been inclined to yield her confidence almoſt from the firſt moment, in which ſhe had ſeen him.

Before ſhe could finiſh her acknowledgments for the hoſpitality ſhe had received, and mention her deſign of going immediately to the convent, ſhe was interrupted by an invitation to lengthen her ſtay at the chateau, which was preſſed by the Count and Counteſs, with an appearance of ſuch friendly ſincerity, that, though ſhe much wiſhed to ſee her old friends at the monaſtery, and to ſigh, once more, over her father's grave, ſhe conſented to remain a few days at the chateau.

To the Abbeſs, however, ſhe immediately wrote, mentioning her arrival in Languedoc and her wiſh to be received into the convent as a boarder; ſhe alſo ſent letters to Monſieur Queſnel and to Valancourt, whom ſhe merely informed of her arrival in France; and as ſhe knew not where the latter might be ſtationed, ſhe directed her letter to his brother's ſeat in Gaſcony.

In the evening, Lady Blanche and Monſ. Du Pont walked with Emily to the cottage of La Voiſin, which ſhe had now a melancholy pleaſure in approaching, for time had ſoftened her grief for the loſs of St. Aubert, though it could not annihilate it, and ſhe felt a ſoothing ſadneſs in indulging the recollections, which this ſcene recalled. La Voiſin was ſtill living, and ſeemed to enjoy, as much as formerly, the tranquil evening of a blameleſs life. He was ſitting at the door of his cottage, watching ſome of his grand children, playing on the graſs before him, and now and then, with a laugh, or a commendation, encouraging their ſports. He immediately recollected Emily whom he was much pleaſed to ſee, and ſhe was as rejoiced to hear, that he had not loſt one of his family, ſince her departure.

"Yes, ma'amſelle" ſaid the old man, "we all live merrily together ſtill, thank God! and I believe there is not a happier family to be found in Languedoc, than ours."

Emily did not truſt herſelf in the chamber, where St. Aubert died; and after half an hour's converſation with La Voiſin and his family, ſhe left the cottage.

During theſe the firſt days of her ſtay at Chateau-le-Blanc, ſhe was often affected, by obſerving the deep, but ſilent melancholy, which at times ſtole over Du Pont; and Emily, pitying the ſelf deluſion, which diſarmed him of the will to depart, determined to withdraw herſelf as ſoon as the reſpect ſhe owed the Count and Counteſs de Villefort would permit. The dejection of his friend ſoon alarmed the anxiety of the Count, to whom Du Pont, at length, confided the ſecret of his hopeleſs affection, which, however, the former could only commiſerate, though he ſecretly determined to befriend his ſuit, if an opportunity of doing ſo ſhould ever occur. Conſidering the dangerous ſituation of Du Pont, he but feebly oppoſed his intention of leaving Chateau-le-Blanc, on the following day, but drew from him a promiſe of a longer viſit, when he could return with ſafety to his peace. Emily herſelf, though ſhe could not encourage his affection, eſteemed him both for the many virtues he poſſeſſed, and for the ſervices ſhe had received from him; and it was not without tender emotions of gratitude and pity, that ſhe now ſaw him depart for his family ſeat in Gaſcony; while he took leave of her with a countenance ſo expreſſive of love and grief, as to intereſt the Count more warmly in his cauſe than before.

In a few days, Emily alſo left the chateau, but not before the Count and Counteſs had received her promiſe to repeat her viſit very ſoon; and ſhe was welcomed by the Abbeſs, with the ſame maternal kindneſs ſhe had formerly experienced, and by the nuns, with much expreſſion of regard. The well known ſcenes of the convent occaſioned her many melancholy recollections, but with theſe were mingled others, that inſpired gratitude for having eſcaped the various dangers, that had purſued her, ſince ſhe quitted it, and for the good, which ſhe yet poſſeſſed; and, though ſhe once more wept, over her father's grave, with tears of tender affection, her grief was ſoftened from its former acuteneſs.

Sometime after her return to the monaſtery, ſhe received a letter from her uncle, Monſ. Queſnel, in anſwer to information that ſhe had arrived in France, and to her inquiries, concerning ſuch of her affairs as he had undertaken to conduct during her abſence, eſpecially as to the period for which La Vallee had been let,

whither it was her wiſh to return, if it ſhould appear, that her income would permit her to do ſo. The reply of Monſ. Queſnel was cold and formal, as ſhe expected, expreſſing neither concern for the evils ſhe ſuffered, nor pleaſure, that ſhe was now removed from them; nor did he allow the opportunity to paſs, of reproving her for her rejection of Count Morano, whom he affected ſtill to believe a man of honour and fortune; nor of vehemently declaiming againſt Montoni, to whom he had always, till now, felt himſelf to be inferior. On Emily's pecuniary concerns, he was not very explicit; he informed her, however, that the term, for which La Vallee had been engaged, was nearly expired; but, without inviting her to his own houſe, added, that her circumſtances would by no means allow her to reſide there, and earneſtly adviſed her to remain, for the preſent, in the convent of St. Claire.

To her inquiries, reſpecting poor old Thereſa, her late father's ſervant, he gave no anſwer. In the poſtſcript to his letter, Monſieur Queſnel mentioned M. Motteville, in whoſe hands the late St. Aubert had placed the chief of his perſonal property, as being likely to arrange his affairs nearly to the ſatisfaction of his creditors, and that Emily would recover much more of her fortune, than ſhe had formerly reaſon to expect. The letter alſo incloſed to Emily an order upon a merchant at Narbonne, for a ſmall ſum of money.

The tranquillity of the monaſtery, and the liberty ſhe was ſuffered to enjoy, in wandering among the woods and ſhores of this delightful province, gradually reſtored her ſpirits to their natural tone, except that anxiety would ſometimes intrude, concerning Valancourt, as the time approached, when it was poſſible that ſhe might receive an anſwer to her letter.

CHAP. XXXIX.

"As when a wave, that from a cloud impends,
And, ſwell'd with tempeſts, on the ſhip deſcends,
White are the decks with foam; the winds aloud
Howl o'er the maſts, and ſing through ev'ry ſhroud:
Pale, trembling, tir'd, the ſailors freeze with fears,
And inſtant death on ev'ry wave appears."

POPE'S HOMER.

THE Lady Blanche, meanwhile, who was left much alone, became impatient for the company of her new friend, whom ſhe wiſhed to obſerve ſharing in the delight ſhe received from the beautiful ſcenery around. She had now no perſon, to whom ſhe

could expreſs her admiration and communicate her pleaſures, no eye, that ſparkled to her ſmile, or countenance that reflected her happineſs; and ſhe became ſpiritleſs and penſive. The Count, obſerving her diſſatisfaction, readily yielded to her entreaties, and reminded Emily of her promiſed viſit; but the ſilence of Valancourt, which was now prolonged far beyond the period, when a letter might have arrived from Eſtuviere, oppreſſed Emily with ſevere anxiety, and rendering her averſe to ſociety, ſhe would willingly have deferred her acceptance of this invitation, till her ſpirits ſhould be relieved. The Count and his family, however, preſſed to ſee her; and, as the circumſtances, that prompted her wiſh for ſolitude, could not be explained, there was an appearance of caprice in her refuſal, which ſhe could not perſevere in, without offending the friends, whoſe eſteem ſhe valued. At length, therefore, ſhe returned upon a ſecond viſit to Chateau-le-Blanc. Here the friendly manner of Count De Villefort encouraged Emily to mention to him her ſituation, reſpecting the eſtates of her late aunt, and to conſult him on the means of recovering them. He had little doubt, that the law would decide in her favour, and, adviſing her to apply to it, offered firſt to write to an advocate at Avignon, on whoſe opinion he thought he could rely. His kindneſs was gratefully accepted by Emily, who, ſoothed by the courteſy ſhe daily experienced, would have been once more happy, could ſhe have been aſſured of Valancourt's welfare and unaltered affection. She had now been above a week at the chateau, without receiving intelligence of him, and though ſhe knew, that if he was abſent from his brother's reſidence, it was ſcarcely probable her letter had yet reached him, ſhe could not forbear to admit doubts and fears, that deſtroyed her peace. Again ſhe would conſider of all that might have happened in the long period, ſince her firſt ſecluſion at Udolpho, and her mind was ſometimes ſo overwhelmed with an apprehenſion, that Valancourt was no more, or that he lived no longer for her, that the company even of Blanche became intolerably oppreſſive, and ſhe would ſit alone in her apartment for hours together, when the engagements of the family allowed her to do ſo, without incivility.

In one of theſe ſolitary hours, ſhe unlocked a little box, which contained ſome letters of Valancourt, with ſome drawings ſhe had ſketched during her ſtay in Tuſcany, the latter which were no longer intereſting to her; but, in the letters, ſhe now with melancholy indulgence, meant to retrace the tenderneſs, that had

ſo often ſoothed her, and rendered her, for a moment inſenſible of the diſtance, which ſeparated her from the writer. But their effect was now changed; the affection they expreſſed appealed ſo forcibly to her heart, when ſhe conſidered that it had, perhaps, yielded to the powers of time and abſence, and even the view of the hand writing recalled ſo many painful recollections, that ſhe found herſelf unable to go through the firſt ſhe had opened, and ſat muſing, with her cheek reſting on her arm, and tears ſtealing from her eyes, when old Dorothee entered the room to inform her, that dinner would be ready, an hour before the uſual time. Emily ſtarted on perceiving her, and haſtily put up the papers, but not before Dorothee had obſerved both her agitation and her tears.

"Ah, ma'amſelle!" ſaid ſhe, "you, who are ſo young,—have you reaſon for ſorrow?"

Emily tried to ſmile, but was unable to ſpeak.

"Alas! dear young lady, when you come to my age, you will not weep at trifles; and ſurely you have nothing ſerious to grieve you."

"No, Dorothee, nothing of any conſequence," replied Emily. Dorothee, now ſtooping to pick up ſomething, that had dropped from among the papers, ſuddenly exclaimed, "Holy Mary! what is it I ſee?" and then, trembling, ſat down in a chair, that ſtood by the table.

"What is it you do ſee?" ſaid Emily, alarmed by her manner, and looking round the room.

"It is herſelf," ſaid Dorothee, "her very ſelf! juſt as ſhe looked a little before ſhe died!"

Emily, ſtill more alarmed, began now to fear, that Dorothee was ſeized with ſudden phrenſy, but entreated her to explain herſelf.

"That picture?" ſaid ſhe, "where did you find it, lady? it is my bleſſed miſtreſs herſelf!"

She laid on the table the miniature, which Emily had long ago found among the papers her father had enjoined her to deſtroy, and over which ſhe had once ſeen him ſhed ſuch tender and affecting tears; and, recollecting all the various circumſtances of his conduct, that had long perplexed her, her emotions increaſed to an exceſs, which deprived her of all power to aſk the queſtions ſhe trembled to have anſwered, and ſhe could only inquire, whether Dorothee was certain the picture reſembled the late Marchioneſs.

"O, ma'amſelle!" ſaid ſhe, "how came it to ſtrike me ſo, the inſtant I ſaw it, if it was not my lady's likeneſs? Ah!"

added ſhe, taking up the miniature, "theſe are her own blue eyes—looking ſo ſweet and ſo mild; and there is her very look, ſuch as I have often ſeen it, when ſhe had ſat thinking for a long while, and then, the tears would often ſteal down her cheeks—but ſhe never would complain! It was that look ſo meek, as it were, and reſigned, that uſed to break my heart and make me love her ſo!"

"Dorothee!" ſaid Emily ſolemnly, "I am intereſted in the cauſe of that grief, more ſo, perhaps, than you may imagine; and I entreat, that you will no longer refuſe to indulge my curioſity;—it is not a common one."

As Emily ſaid this, ſhe remembered the papers, with which the picture had been found, and had ſcarcely a doubt, that they had concerned the Marchioneſs de Villeroi; but with this ſuppoſition came a ſcruple, whether ſhe ought to inquire further on a ſubject, which might prove to be the ſame, that her father had ſo carefully endeavoured to conceal. Her curioſity, concerning the Marchioneſs, powerful as it was, it is probable ſhe would now have reſiſted, as ſhe had formerly done, on unwarily obſerving the few terrible words in the papers, which had never ſince been eraſed from her memory, had ſhe been certain that the hiſtory of that lady was the ſubject of thoſe papers, or that ſuch ſimple particulars only as it was probable Dorothee could relate were included in her father's command. What was known to her could be no ſecret to many other perſons; and, ſince it appeared very unlikely, that St. Aubert ſhould attempt to conceal what Emily might learn by ordinary means, ſhe at length concluded, that if the papers had related to the ſtory of the Marchioneſs, it was not thoſe circumſtances of it, which Dorothee could diſcloſe, that he had thought ſufficiently important to wiſh to have concealed. She, therefore, no longer heſitated to make the inquiries, that might lead to the gratification of her curioſity.

"Ah, ma'amſelle!" ſaid Dorothee, "it is a ſad ſtory, and cannot be told now: but what am I ſaying? I never will tell it. Many years have paſſed, ſince it happened; and I never loved to talk of the Marchioneſs to any body, but my huſband. He lived in the family, at that time, as well as myſelf, and he knew many particulars from me, which nobody elſe did; for I was about the perſon of my lady in her laſt illneſs, and ſaw and heard as much, or more than my lord himſelf. Sweet ſaint! how patient ſhe was! When ſhe died, I thought I could have died with her!"

"Dorothee," ſaid Emily, interrupting her, "what you ſhall tell, you may depend upon it, ſhall never be diſcloſed by me. I have, I repeat it, particular reaſons for wiſhing to be informed on this ſubject, and am willing to bind myſelf, in the moſt ſolemn manner, never to mention what you ſhall wiſh me to conceal."

Dorothee ſeemed ſurpriſed at the earneſtneſs of Emily's manner, and, after regarding her for ſome moments, in ſilence, ſaid, "Young lady! that look of yours pleads for you—it is ſo like my dear miſtreſs's, that I can almoſt fancy I ſee her before me; if you were her daughter, you could not remind me of her more. But dinner will be ready—had you not better go down?"

"You will firſt promiſe to grant my requeſt," ſaid Emily. "and ought not you firſt to tell me, ma'amſelle, how this picture fell into your hands, and the reaſons, you ſay you have for curioſity about my lady?"

"Why, no, Dorothee," replied Emily, recollecting herſelf, "I have alſo particular reaſons for obſerving ſilence, on theſe ſubjects, at leaſt, till I know further; and, remember, I do not promiſe ever to ſpeak upon them; therefore, do not let me induce you to ſatisfy my curioſity, from an expectation, that I ſhall gratify yours. What I may judge proper to conceal, does not concern myſelf alone, or I ſhould have leſs ſcruple in revealing it; let a confidence in my honour alone perſuade you to diſcloſe what I requeſt."

"Well, lady!" replied Dorothee, after a long pauſe, during which her eyes were fixed upon Emily, "you ſeem ſo much intereſted,——and this picture and that face of yours make me think you have ſome reaſon to be ſo,—that I will truſt you—and tell ſome things, that I never told before to any body, but my huſband, though there are people, who have ſuſpected as much. I will tell you the particulars of my lady's death, too, and ſome of my own ſuſpicions; but you muſt firſt promiſe me by all the ſaints"———

Emily, interrupting her, ſolemnly promiſed never to reveal what ſhould be confided to her without Dorothee's conſent.

"But there is the horn, ma'amſelle ſounding for dinner," ſaid Dorothee; "I muſt be gone."

"When ſhall I ſee you again?" inquired Emily.

Dorothee muſed, and then replied, "Why, madam, it may make people curious, if it is known I am ſo much in your apartment, and that I ſhould be ſorry for; ſo I will come when I am leaſt likely to be obſerved. I have little leiſure in the day,

and I ſhall have a good deal to ſay; ſo, if you pleaſe, ma'am, I will come, when the family are all in bed."

"That will ſuite me very well," replied Emily; "Remember then to night"———

"Aye, that is well remembered," ſaid Dorothee, "I fear I cannot come to night, madam, for there will be the dance of the vintage, and it will be late, before the ſervants go to reſt; for, when they once ſet in to dance, they will keep it up, in the cool of the air, till morning; at leaſt, it uſed to be ſo in my time."

"Ah! is it the dance of the vintage?" ſaid Emily, with a deep ſigh, remembering, that it was on the evening of this feſtival, in the preceding year, that St. Aubert and herſelf had arrived in the neighbourhood of Chateau-le-Blanc. She pauſed a moment, overcome by the ſudden recollection, and then, recovering herſelf, added—"But this dance is in the open woods; you therefore will not be wanted, and can eaſily come to me."

Dorothee replied, that ſhe had been accuſtomed to be preſent at the dance of the vintage, and ſhe did not wiſh to be abſent now; "but if I can get away, madam, I will," ſaid ſhe.

Emily then haſtened to the dining room, where the Count conducted himſelf with the courteſy, which is inſeparable from true dignity, and of which the Counteſs frequently practiſed little, though her manner to Emily was an exception to her uſual habit. But, if ſhe retained few of the ornamental virtues, ſhe cheriſhed other qualities, which ſhe ſeemed to conſider invaluable. She had diſmiſſed the grace of modeſty, but then ſhe knew perfectly well how to manage the ſtare of aſſurance; her manners had little of the tempered ſweetneſs, which is neceſſary to render the female character intereſting, but ſhe could occaſionally throw into them an affectation of ſpirits, which ſeemed to triumph over every perſon, who approached her. In the country, however, ſhe generally affected an elegant languor, that perſuaded her almoſt to faint, when her favourite read to her a ſtory of fictitious ſorrow; but her countenance ſuffered no change, when living objects of diſtreſs ſolicited her charity, and her heart beat with no tranſport to the thought of giving them inſtant relief;—ſhe was a ſtranger to the higheſt luxury, of which, perhaps, the human mind can be ſenſible, for her benevolence had never yet called ſmiles upon the face of miſery.

In the evening, the Count, with all his family, except the Counteſs and Mademoiſelle Bearn, went to the woods to witneſs the feſtivity of the peaſants. The ſcene was in a glade, where the trees, opening, formed a circle round the turf they highly

overſhadowed; between their branches, vines, loaded with ripe cluſters, were hung in gay feſtoons; and, beneath, were tables, with fruit, wine, cheeſe and other rural fare,—and ſeats for the Count and his family. At a little diſtance, were benches for the elder peaſants, few of whom, however, could forbear to join the jocund dance, which began ſoon after ſunſet, when ſeveral of ſixty, tripped it with almoſt as much glee and airy lightneſs, as thoſe of ſixteen.

The muſicians, who ſat careleſsly on the graſs at the foot of a tree, ſeemed inſpired by the ſound of their own inſtruments, which were chiefly flutes and a kind of a long guitar. Behind ſtood a boy, flouriſhing a tamborine, and dancing a ſolo, except that, as he ſometimes gaily toſſed the inſtrument, he tripped among the other dancers, when his antic geſtures called forth a broader laugh, and heightened the ruſtic ſpirit of the ſcene.

The Count was highly delighted with the happineſs he witneſſed, to which his bounty had largely contributed, and the Lady Blanche joined the dance with a young gentleman of her father's party. Du Pont requeſted Emily's hand, but her ſpirits were too much depreſſed, to permit her to engage in the preſent feſtivity, which called to her remembrance that of the preceding year, when St. Aubert was living, and of the melancholy ſcenes which had immediately followed it.

Overcome by theſe recollections, ſhe, at length left the ſpot, and walked ſlowly into the woods, where the ſoftened muſic, floating at a diſtance, ſoothed her melancholy mind. The moon threw a mellow light among the foliage; the air was balmy and cool, and Emily, loſt in thought, ſtrolled on, without obſerving whither, till ſhe perceived the ſounds ſinking afar off, and an awful ſtillneſs round her, except that, ſometimes, the nightingale beguiled the ſilence with

"Liquid notes, that cloſe the eye of day."

At length, ſhe found herſelf near the avenue, which, on the night of her father's arrival, Michael had attempted to paſs in ſearch of a houſe, which was ſtill nearly as wild and deſolate as it had then appeared; for the Count had been ſo much engaged in directing other improvements, that he had neglected to give orders concerning this extenſive approach, and the road was yet broken, and the trees overloaded with their own luxuriance.

As ſhe ſtood ſurveying it, and remembering the emotions which ſhe had formerly ſuffered there, ſhe ſuddenly recollected the figure, that had been ſeen ſtealing among the trees, and which

had returned no anſwer to Michael's repeated calls; and ſhe experienced ſomewhat of the fear, that had then aſſailed her, for it did not appear improbable, that theſe deep woods were occaſionally the haunt of banditti. She, therefore, turned back, and was haſtily purſuing her way to the dancers, when ſhe heard ſteps approaching from the avenue; and, being ſtill beyond the call of the peaſants on the green, for ſhe could neither hear their voices, or their muſic, ſhe quickened her pace; but the perſons following gained faſt upon her, and, at length diſtinguiſhing the voice of Henri, ſhe walked leiſurely, till he came up. He expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe at meeting her ſo far from the company; and, on her ſaying, that the pleaſant moonlight had beguiled her to walk farther than ſhe intended, an exclamation burſt from the lips of his companion, and ſhe thought ſhe heard Valancourt ſpeak! It was, indeed, he! and the meeting was ſuch as may be imagined, between perſons ſo affectionate, and ſo long ſeparated as they had been.

In the joy of theſe moments, Emily forgot all her paſt ſufferings, and Valancourt ſeemed to have forgotten, that any perſon but Emily exiſted; while Henri was a ſilent and aſtoniſhed ſpectator of the ſcene.

Valancourt aſked a thouſand queſtions, concerning herſelf and Montoni, which there was now no time to anſwer; but ſhe learned that her letter had been forwarded to him, at Paris, which he had previouſly quitted, and was returning to Gaſcony, whither the letter alſo returned, which, at length informed him of Emily's arrival, and on the receipt of which he had immediately ſet out for Languedoc. On reaching the monaſtery, whence ſhe had dated her letter, he found, to his extreme diſappointment, that the gates were already cloſed for the night; and believing, that he ſhould not ſee Emily, till the morrow, he was returning to his little inn, with the intention of writing to her, when he was overtaken by Henri, with whom he had been intimate at Paris, and was led to her, whom he was ſecretly lamenting that he ſhould not ſee, till the following day.

Emily, with Valancourt and Henri, now returned to the green, where the latter preſented Valancourt to the Count, who, ſhe fancied, received him with leſs than his uſual benignity, though it appeared, that they were not ſtrangers to each other. He was invited, however, to partake of the diverſions of the evening; and, when he had paid his reſpects to the Count, and while the dancers continued their feſtivity, he ſeated himſelf by Emily, and converſed, without conſtraint. The lights, which

were hung among the trees, under which they ſat, allowed her a more perfect view of the countenance ſhe had ſo frequently in abſence endeavoured to recollect, and ſhe perceived, with ſome regret, that it was not the ſame as when laſt ſhe ſaw it. There was all its wonted intelligence and fire; but it had loſt much of the ſimplicity, and ſomewhat of the open benevolence, that uſed to characteriſe it. Still, however, it was an intereſting countenance; but Emily thought ſhe perceived, at intervals, anxiety contract, and melancholy fix the features of Valancourt; ſometimes, too, he fell into a momentary muſing, and then appeared anxious to diſſipate thought; while, at others, as he fixed his eyes on Emily, a kind of ſudden diſtraction ſeemed to croſs his mind. In her he perceived the ſame goodneſs and beautiful ſimplicity, that had charmed him, on their firſt acquaintance. The bloom of her countenance was ſomewhat faded, but all its ſweetneſs remained, and it was rendered more intereſting, than ever, by the faint expreſſion of melancholy, that ſometimes mingled with her ſmile.

At his requeſt, ſhe related the moſt important circumſtances, that had occured to her, ſince ſhe left France, and emotions of pity and indignation alternately prevailed in his mind, when he heard how much ſhe had ſuffered from the villany of Montoni. More than once, when ſhe was ſpeaking of his conduct, of which the guilt was rather ſoftened, than exaggerated, by her repreſentation, he ſtarted from his ſeat and walked away, apparently overcome as much by ſelf accuſation as by reſentment. Her ſufferings alone were mentioned in the few words, which he could addreſs to her, and he liſtened not to the account, which ſhe was careful to give as diſtinctly as poſſible of the preſent loſs of Madame Montoni's eſtates, and of the little reaſon there was to expect their reſtoration. At length, Valancourt remained loſt in thought, and then ſome ſecret cauſe ſeemed to overcome him, with anguiſh. Again he abruptly left her. When he returned, ſhe perceived, that he had been weeping, and tenderly begged, that he would compoſe himſelf. "My ſufferings are all paſſed now," ſaid ſhe, "for I have eſcaped from the tyranny of Montoni, and I ſee you well—let me alſo ſee you happy."

Valancourt was more agitated, than before. "I am unworthy of you, Emily," ſaid he, "I am unworthy of you;"—words, by his manner of uttering which Emily was then more ſhocked than by their import. She fixed on him a mournful and inquiring eye. "Do not look thus on me," ſaid he, turning away and preſſing her hand; "I cannot bear thoſe looks."

"I would ask," said Emily, in a gentle but agitated voice, "the meaning of your words; but I perceive, that the question would distress you now. Let us talk on other subjects. To morrow, perhaps, you may be more composed. Observe those moonlight woods, and the towers, which appear obscurely in the perspective. You used to be a great admirer of landscape, and I have heard you say, that the faculty of deriving consolation, under misfortune, from the sublime prospects, which neither oppression, or poverty withhold from us, was the peculiar blessing of the innocent." Valancourt was deeply affected. "Yes," replied he, "I had once a taste for innocent and elegant delights, I had once an uncorrupted heart." Then, checking himself, he added, "Do you remember our journey together in the Pyrenees?"

"Can I forget it?" said Emily——"Would that I could!" he replied;—"that was the happiest period of my life. I then loved with enthusiasm, whatever was truely great, or good." It was sometime before Emily could repress her tears, and try to command her emotions. "If you wish to forget that journey," said she, "it must certainly be my wish to forget it also." She paused, and then added, "You make me very uneasy; but this is not the time for further inquiry; yet, how can I bear to believe, even for a moment, that you are less worthy of my esteem than formerly? I have still sufficient confidence in your candour, to believe, that, when I shall ask for an explanation, you will give it me."—"Yes," said Valancourt, "yes, Emily: I have not yet lost my candour: if I had, I could better have disguised my emotions, on learning what were your sufferings—your virtues,—while I—I—but I will say no more. I did not mean to have said even so much—I have been surprised into the self-accusation. Tell me, Emily, that you will not forget that journey—will not wish to forget it, and I will be calm. I would not lose the remembrance of it for the whole earth."

"How contradictory is this!" said Emily;—"but we may be overheard. My recollection of it shall depend upon yours; I will endeavour to forget, or to recollect it, as you may do. Let us join the Count."—"Tell me, first," said Valancourt, "that you forgive the uneasiness I have occasioned you, this evening, and that you will still love me."—"I sincerely forgive you," replied Emily. "You best know whether I shall continue to love you, for you know whether you deserve my esteem. At present, I will believe that you do. It is unnecessary to say," added she, observing his dejection, "how much pain it would

give me to believe otherwiſe.—The young lady who approaches is the Count's daughter."

Valancourt and Emily now joined the Lady Blanche; and the party, ſoon after, ſat down with the Count, his ſon, and the Chevalier Du Pont, at a banquet, ſpread under a gay awning, beneath the trees. At the table alſo were ſeated ſeveral of the moſt venerable of the Count's tenants, and it was a feſtive repaſt to all but Valancourt and Emily. When the Count retired to the chateau, he did not invite Valancourt to accompany him, who, therefore, took leave of Emily, and retired to his ſolitary inn for the night: meanwhile, ſhe ſoon withdrew to her own apartment, where ſhe muſed, with deep anxiety and concern, on his behaviour, and on the Count's reception of him. Her attention was thus ſo wholly engaged, that ſhe forgot Dorothee and her appointment, till morning was far advanced, when, knowing that the good old woman would not come, ſhe retired, for a few hours to repoſe.

On the following day, when the Count had accidentally joined Emily in one of the walks, they talked of the feſtival of the preceding evening, and this led him to a mention of Valancourt. "That is a young man of talents," ſaid he; "you were formerly acquainted with him, I perceive." Emily ſaid that ſhe was. "He was introduced to me at Paris," ſaid the Count, "and I was much pleaſed with him, on our firſt acquaintance." He paused, and Emily trembled, between the deſire of hearing more and the fear of ſhewing the Count, that ſhe felt an intereſt on the ſubject. "May I aſk," ſaid he, at length, "how long you have known Monſieur Valancourt?"—"Will you allow me to aſk your reaſon for the queſtion, ſir?" ſaid ſhe; "and I will anſwer it immediately."—"Certainly," ſaid the Count, "that is but juſt. I will tell you my reaſon. I cannot but perceive that Monſieur Valancourt admires you; in that, however, there is nothing extraordinary; every perſon, who ſees you muſt do the ſame. I am above uſing common place compliments; I ſpeak with ſincerity. What I fear, is, that he is a favoured admirer."——"Why do you fear it, ſir?" ſaid Emily, endeavouring to conceal her emotion.—"Becauſe," replied the Count, "I think him not worthy of your favour." Emily, greatly agitated, entreated further explanation. "I will give it," ſaid he, "if you will believe, that nothing but a ſtrong intereſt in your welfare could induce me to hazard that aſſertion."—"I muſt believe ſo, ſir," replied Emily.

"But let us reſt under theſe trees," ſaid the Count, obſerving the paleneſs of her countenance; "here is a ſeat—you are fa-

tigued." They ſat down, and the Count proceeded. "Many young ladies, circumſtanced as you are, would think my conduct, on this occaſion, and on ſo ſhort an acquaintance, impertinent, inſtead of friendly; from what I have obſerved of your temper and underſtanding, I do not fear ſuch a return from you. Our acquaintance has been ſhort, but long enough to make me eſteem you, and feel a lively intereſt in your happineſs. You deſerve to be very happy, and I truſt that you will be ſo." Emily ſighed ſoftly, and bowed her thanks. The Count pauſed again, "I am unpleaſantly circumſtanced," ſaid he, "but an opportunity of rendering you important ſervice ſhall overcome inferior conſiderations. Will you inform me of the manner of your firſt acquaintance with the Chevalier Valancourt, if the ſubject is not too painful?"

Emily briefly related the accident of their meeting in the preſence of her father, and then ſo earneſtly entreated the Count not to heſitate in declaring what he knew, that he perceived the violent emotion, againſt which ſhe was contending, and, regarding her with a look of tender compaſſion, conſidered how he might communicate his information with leaſt pain to his anxious auditor.

"The Chevalier and my ſon," ſaid he, "were introduced to each other, at the table of a brother officer, at whoſe houſe I alſo met him, and invited him to my own, whenever he ſhould be diſengaged. I did not then know, that he had formed an acquaintance with a ſet of men, a diſgrace to their ſpecies, who live by plunder and paſs their lives in continual debauchery. I knew ſeveral of the Chevalier's family, reſident at Paris, and conſidered them as ſufficient pledges for his introduction to my own. But you are ill; I will leave the ſubject."—"No, ſir," ſaid Emily, "I beg you will proceed; I am only diſtreſſed."—"*Only!*" ſaid the Count, with emphaſis; "however, I will proceed. I ſoon learned, that theſe, his aſſociates, had drawn him into a courſe of diſſipation, from which he appeared to have neither the power, nor the inclination, to extricate himſelf. He loſt large ſums at the gaming table; he became infatuated with play; and was ruined. I ſpoke tenderly of this to his friends, who aſſured me, that they had remonſtrated with him, till they were weary. I afterwards learned, that, in conſideration of his talents for play, which were generally ſucceſsful, when unoppoſed by the tricks of villany,—that, in conſideration of theſe, the party had initiated him into the ſecrets of their trade, and allotted him a ſhare of their profits." "Impoſſible!" ſaid Emily ſuddenly; "but—pardon me, ſir, I ſcarcely know what I ſay; allow for the

diſtreſs of my mind. I muſt, indeed, I muſt believe, that you have not been truly informed. The Chevalier had, doubtleſs, enemies who miſrepreſented him."—"I ſhould be moſt happy to believe ſo," replied the Count, "but I cannot. Nothing ſhort of conviction, and a regard for your happineſs could have urged me to repeat theſe unpleaſant reports."

Emily was ſilent. She recollected Valancourt's ſayings, on the preceding evening, which diſcovered the pangs of ſelf reproach, and ſeemed to confirm all that the Count had related. Yet ſhe had not fortitude enough to dare conviction. Her heart was overwhelmed with anguiſh at the mere ſuſpicion of his guilt, and ſhe could not endure a belief of it. After a long ſilence, the Count ſaid, "I perceive, and can allow for, your want of conviction. It is neceſſary I ſhould give ſome proof of what I have aſſerted; but this I cannot do, without ſubjecting one, who is very dear to me, to danger."—"What is the danger you apprehend, ſir?" ſaid Emily; "if I can prevent it, you may ſafely confide in my honour."—"On your honour I am certain I can rely," ſaid the Count; "but can I truſt your fortitude? Do you think you can reſiſt the ſolicitation of a favoured admirer, when he pleads, in affliction, for the name of one, who has robbed him of a bleſſing?"—"I ſhall not be expoſed to ſuch a temptation, ſir," ſaid Emily, with modeſt pride, "for I cannot favour one, whom I muſt no longer eſteem. I, however, readily give my word." Tears, in the meantime, contradicted her firſt aſſertion; and ſhe felt, that time and effort only could eradicate an affection, which had been formed on virtuous eſteem, and cheriſhed by habit and difficulty.

"I will truſt you then," ſaid the Count, "for conviction is neceſſary to your peace, and cannot I perceive, be obtained, without this confidence. My ſon has too often been an eye witneſs of the Chevalier's ill conduct; he was very near being drawn in by it; he was, indeed, drawn in to the commiſſion of many follies, but I reſcued him from guilt and deſtruction. Judge then, Mademoiſelle St. Aubert, whether a father who had nearly loſt his only ſon, by the example of the Chevalier, has not, from conviction, reaſon to warn thoſe, whom he eſteems, againſt truſting their happineſs in ſuch hands. I have myſelf ſeen the Chevalier engaged in deep play with men, whom I almoſt ſhuddered to look upon. If you ſtill doubt, I will refer you to my ſon."

"I muſt not doubt what you have yourſelf witneſſed," replied Emily, ſinking with grief, "or what you aſſert. But the Chevalier has, perhaps, been drawn only into a tranſient folly,

which he may never repeat. If you had known the juſtneſs of his former principles, you would allow for my preſent incredulity."

"Alas!" obſerved the Count, "it is difficult to believe that which will make us wretched. But I will not ſooth you by flattering and falſe hopes. We all know how faſcinating the vice of gaming is, and how difficult it is, alſo, to conquer habit; the Chevalier might, perhaps, reform for a while, but he would ſoon relapſe into diſſipation—for I fear, not only the bonds of habit would be powerful, but, that his morals are corrupted. And—why ſhould I conceal from you, that play is not his only vice? he appears to have a taſte for every vicious pleaſure."

The Count heſitated and pauſed; while Emily endeavoured to ſupport herſelf, as, with increaſing perturbation, ſhe expected what he might further ſay. A long pauſe of ſilence enſued, during which he was viſibly agitated; at length, he ſaid, "It would be a cruel delicacy, that could prevail with me to be ſilent—and I will inform you, that the Chevalier's extravagance has brought him twice into the priſons of Paris, from whence he was laſt extricated, as I was told upon authority, which I cannot doubt, by a well known Pariſian Counteſs, with whom he continued to reſide, when I left Paris."

He pauſed again; and, looking at Emily, perceived her countenance change, and that ſhe was falling from the ſeat; he caught her, but ſhe had fainted, and he called loudly for aſſiſtance. They were, however, beyond the hearing of his ſervants at the chateau, and he feared to leave her while he went thither for aſſiſtance, yet knew not how otherwiſe to obtain it; till a fountain at no great diſtance caught his eye, and he endeavoured to ſupport Emily againſt the tree, under which ſhe had been ſitting, while he went thither for water. But, again he was perplexed, for he had nothing near him, in which water could be brought, but while, with increaſed anxiety, he watched her, he thought he perceived in her countenance ſymptoms of returning life.

It was long, however, before ſhe revived, and ſhe then found herſelf ſupported—not by the Count but by Valancourt, who was obſerving her with looks of earneſt apprehenſion, and who now ſpoke to her in a tone, tremulous with his anxiety. At the ſound of his well known voice, ſhe raiſed her eyes, but preſently cloſed them, and a faintneſs again came over her.

The Count, with a look ſomewhat ſtern, waved him to withdraw; but he only ſighed heavily, and called on the name of Emily, as he again held the water, that had been brought, to her lips. On the Count's repeating his action, and accompany-

ing it with words, Valancourt anſwered him with a look of deep reſentment, and refuſed to leave the place, till ſhe ſhould revive, or to reſign her for a moment to the care of any perſon. In the next inſtant, his conſcience ſeemed to inform him of what had been the ſubject of the Count's converſation with Emily, and indignation flaſhed in his eyes; but it was quickly repreſſed, and ſucceeded by an expreſſion of ſerious anguiſh, that induced the Count to regard him with more pity than reſentment, and the view of which ſo much affected Emily, when ſhe again revived, that ſhe yielded to the weakneſs of tears. But ſhe ſoon reſtrained them, and, exerting her reſolution to appear recovered, ſhe roſe, thanked the Count and Henri, with whom Valancourt had entered the garden, for their care, and moved towards the chateau, without noticing Valancout, who, heart ſtruck by her manner, exclaimed in a low voice—"Good God! how have I deſerved this?—what has been ſaid, to occaſion this change?"

Emily, without replying, but with increaſed emotion, quickened her ſteps. "What has thus diſordered you, Emily?" ſaid he, as he ſtill walked by her ſide: "give me a few moments' converſation, I entreat you;—I am very miſerable!"

Though this was ſpoken in a low voice, it was overheard by the Count, who immediately replied, that Mademoiſelle St. Aubert was then too much indiſpoſed, to attend to any converſation, but that he would venture to promiſe ſhe would ſee Monſieur Valancourt on the morrow, if ſhe was better.

Valancourt's cheek was crimſoned; he looked haughtily at the Count, and then at Emily, with ſucceſſive expreſſions of ſurpriſe, grief and ſupplication, which ſhe could neither miſunderſtand, or reſiſt, and ſhe ſaid languidly—"I ſhall be better tomorrow, and if you wiſh to accept the Count's permiſſion, I will ſee you then."

"See me!" exclaimed Valancourt, as he threw a glance of mingled pride and reſentment upon the Count; and then, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he added—"But I will come, madam; I will accept the Count's *permiſſion*."

When they reached the door of the chateau, he lingered a moment, for his reſentment was now fled; and then, with a look ſo expreſſive of tenderneſs and grief, that Emily's heart was not proof againſt it, he bade her good morning, and bowing ſlightly to the Count, diſappeared.

Emily withdrew to her own apartment, under ſuch oppreſſion of heart as ſhe had ſeldom known, when ſhe endeavoured to recollect all that the Count had told, to examine the probability of the circumſtances he himſelf believed, and to conſider of her

future conduct towards Valancourt. But, when ſhe attempted to think, her mind refuſed controul, and ſhe could only feel that ſhe was miſerable. One moment, ſhe ſunk under the conviction, that Valancourt was no longer the ſame, whom ſhe had ſo tenderly loved, the idea of whom had hitherto ſupported her under affliction, and cheered her with the hope of happier days,—but a fallen, a worthleſs character, whom ſhe muſt teach herſel to deſpiſe—if ſhe could not forget. Then, unable to endure this terrible ſuppoſition, ſhe rejected it, and diſdained to believe him capable of conduct, ſuch as the Count had deſcribed, to whom ſhe believed he had been miſrepreſented by ſome artful enemy; and there were moments, when ſhe even ventured to doubt the integrity of the Count himſelf, and to ſuſpect, that he was influenced by ſome ſelfiſh motive to break her connection with Valancourt. But this was the error of an inſtant, only; the Count's character which ſhe had heard ſpoken of by Du Pont and many other perſons, and had herſelf obſerved, enabled her to judge, and forbade the ſuppoſition; had her confidence, indeed, been leſs, there appeared to be no temptation to betray him into conduct ſo treacherous, and ſo cruel. Nor did reflection ſuffer her to preſerve the hope, that Valancourt had been miſrepreſented to the Count, who had ſaid, that he ſpoke chiefly from his own obſervation, and from his ſon's experience. She muſt part from Valancourt, therefore, for ever—for what of either happineſs or tranquillity could ſhe expect with a man, whoſe taſtes were degenerated into low inclinations, and to whom vice was become habitual? whom ſhe muſt no longer eſteem, though the remembrance of what he once was, and the long habit of loving him, would render it very difficult for her to deſpiſe him.

"O Valancourt!" ſhe would exclaim, "having been ſeparated ſo long, do we meet, only to be miſerable—only to part for ever."

Amidſt all the tumult of her mind, ſhe remembered pertinaciouſly the ſeeming candour and ſimplicity of his conduct, on the preceding night; and, had ſhe dared to truſt her own heart, it would have led her to hope much from this. Still ſhe could not reſolve to diſmiſs him for ever, without obtaining further proof of his ill conduct; yet ſhe ſaw no probability of procuring it, if, indeed proof more poſitive was poſſible. Something, however, it was neceſſary to decide upon, and ſhe almoſt determined to be guided in her opinion ſolely by the manner, with which Valancourt ſhould receive her hints concerning his late conduct.

Thus paſſed the hours till dinner time, when Emily, ſtruggling againſt the preſſure of her grief, dried her tears, and joined the family at table, where the Count preſerved towards her the moſt

delicate attention; but the Counteſs and Mademoiſelle Bearn, having looked, for a moment, with ſurpriſe, on her dejected countenance, began, as uſual, to talk of trifles, while the eyes of Lady Blanche aſked much of her friend, who could only reply by a mournful ſmile.

Emily withdrew as ſoon after dinner as poſſible, and was followed by the Lady Blanche, whoſe anxious inquiries, however, ſhe found herſelf quite unequal to anſwer, and whom ſhe entreated to ſpare her on the ſubject of her diſtreſs. To converſe on any topic, was now, indeed, ſo extremely painful to her, that ſhe ſoon gave up the attempt, and Blanche left her, with pity of the ſorrow, which ſhe perceived ſhe had no power to aſſuage.

Emily ſecretly determined to go to her convent in a day or two; for company, eſpecially that of the Counteſs and Mademoiſelle Bearn, was intolerable to her, in the preſent ſtate of her ſpirits; and, in the retirement of the convent, as well as the kindneſs of the abbeſs, ſhe hoped to recover the command of her mind, and to teach it reſignation to the event, which, ſhe too plainly perceived, was approaching.

To have loſt Valancourt by death, or to have ſeen him married to a rival, would, ſhe thought, have given her leſs anguiſh, than a conviction of his unworthineſs, which muſt terminate in miſery to himſelf, and which robbed her even of the ſolitary image her heart ſo long had cheriſhed. Theſe painful reflections were interrupted, for a moment, by a note from Valancourt, written in evident diſtraction of mind, entreating that ſhe would permit him to ſee her on the approaching evening, inſtead of the following morning; a requeſt, which occaſioned her ſo much agitation, that ſhe was unable to anſwer it. She wiſhed to ſee him, and to terminate her preſent ſtate of ſuſpenſe, yet ſhrunk from the interview, and, incapable of deciding for herſelf, ſhe, at length, ſent to beg a few moments' converſation with the Count in his library, where ſhe delivered to him the note, and requeſted his advice. After reading it, he ſaid, that, if ſhe believed herſelf well enough to ſupport the interview, his opinion was, that, for the relief of both parties, it ought to take place, that evening.

"His affection for you is, undoubtedly, a very ſincere one," added the Count; "and he appears ſo much diſtreſſed, and you, my amiable friend, are ſo ill at eaſe—that the ſooner the affair is decided the better."

Emily replied, therefore, to Valancourt, that ſhe would ſee him, and then exerted herſelf in endeavours to attain fortitude and compoſure, to bear her through the approaching ſcene—a ſcene ſo afflictingly the reverſe of any, to which ſhe had looked forward!

CHAP. XL.

"Is all the council that we two have ſhared,
——————— the hours that we have ſpent,
When we have chid the haſty-footed time
For parting us———Oh! and is all forgot?
———————————————
And will you rent our ancient love aſunder?"

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

IN the evening, when Emily was at length informed, that Count De Villefort requeſted to ſee her, ſhe gueſſed that Valancourt was below, and, endeavouring to aſſume compoſure and to recollect all her ſpirits, ſhe roſe and left the apartment; but on reaching the door of the library, where ſhe imagined him to be, her emotion returned with ſuch energy, that, fearing to truſt herſelf in the room, ſhe returned into the hall, where ſhe continued for a conſiderable time, unable to command her agitated ſpirits.

When ſhe could recall them, ſhe found in the library Valancourt, ſeated with the Count, who both roſe on her entrance; but ſhe did not dare to look at Valancourt, and the Count, having led her to a chair, immediately withdrew.

Emily remained with her eyes fixed on the floor, under ſuch oppreſſion of heart, that ſhe could not ſpeak, and with difficulty breathed; while Valancourt threw himſelf into a chair beſide her, and, ſighing heavily, continued ſilent, when, had ſhe raiſed her eyes, ſhe would have perceived the violent emotions, with which he was agitated.

At length, in a tremulous voice, he ſaid, "I have ſolicited to ſee you this evening, that I might, at leaſt, be ſpared the further torture of ſuſpenſe, which your altered manner had occaſioned me, and which the hints I have juſt received from the Count have in part explained. I perceive I have enemies, Emily, who envied me my late happineſs, and who have been buſy in ſearching out the means to deſtroy it: I perceive, too, that time and abſence have weakened the affection you once felt for me, and that you can now eaſily be taught to forget me."

His laſt words faltered, and Emily, leſs able to ſpeak than before, continued ſilent.

"O what a meeting is this!" exclaimed Valancourt, ſtarting from his ſeat, and pacing the room with hurried ſteps, "what a meeting is this, after our long—long ſeparation!" Again he ſat down, and, after the ſtruggle of a moment, he added in a firm but deſpairing tone, "This is too much—I cannot bear it! Emily, will you not ſpeak to me?"

He covered his face with his hand, as if to conceal his emotion, and took Emily's, which ſhe did not withdraw. Her tears could no longer be reſtrained; and, when he raiſed his eyes and perceived that ſhe was weeping, all his tenderneſs returned, and a gleam of hope appeared to croſs his mind, for he exclaimed, "O! you do pity me, then, you do love me! Yes, you are ſtill my own Emily——let me believe thoſe tears, that tell me ſo!"

Emily now made an effort to recover her firmneſs, and, haſtily drying them, "Yes," ſaid ſhe, "I do pity you—I weep for you—but, ought I to think of you with affection? You may remember that yeſter evening I ſaid, I had ſtill ſufficient confidence in your candour to believe, that, when I ſhould requeſt an explanation of your words, you would give it. This explanation is now unneceſſary, I underſtand them too well; but prove, at leaſt, that your candour is deſerving of the confidence I give it, when I aſk you, whether you are conſcious of being the ſame eſtimable Valancourt—whom I once loved."

"Once loved!" cried he,—"the ſame—the ſame!" He pauſed in extreme emotion, and then added, in a voice at once ſolemn, and dejected,—"No—I am not the ſame!—I am loſt—I am no longer worthy of you!"

He again concealed his face. Emily was too much affected by this honeſt confeſſion to reply immediately, and, while ſhe ſtruggled to overcome the pleadings of her heart, and to act with the deciſive firmneſs, which was neceſſary for her future peace, ſhe perceived all the danger of truſting long to her reſolution, in the preſence of Valancourt, and was anxious to conclude an interview, that tortured them both; yet, when ſhe conſidered, that this was probably their laſt meeting, her fortitude ſunk at once, and ſhe experienced only emotions of tenderneſs and of deſpondency.

Valancourt, meanwhile, loſt in emotions of remorſe and grief, which he had neither the power, or the will to expreſs, ſat inſenſible almoſt of the preſence of Emily, his features ſtill concealed, and his breaſt agitated by convulſive ſighs.

"Spare me the neceſſity," ſaid Emily, recollecting her fortitude, "ſpare me the neceſſity of mentioning thoſe circumſtances of your conduct, which oblige me to break our connection for ever. We muſt part, I now ſee you for the laſt time."

"Impoſſible!" cried Valancourt, roufed from his deep ſilence, "You cannot mean what you ſay!—you cannot mean to throw me from you for ever!"

"We muſt part," repeated Emily, with emphaſis, "and that for ever! Your own conduct has made this neceſſary."

"This is the Count's determination," ſaid he haughtily, "not yours, and I ſhall inquire by what authority he interferes between us." He now roſe, and walked about the room in great emotion.

"Let me ſave you from this error," ſaid Emily, not leſs agitated, "it is my determination, and, if you reflect a moment on your late conduct, you will perceive, that my future peace requires it."

"Your future peace requires, that we ſhould part! part for ever!" ſaid Valancourt, "How little did I ever expect to hear you ſay ſo!"

"And how little did I expect, that it would be neceſſary for me to ſay ſo!" rejoined Emily, while her voice ſoftened into tenderneſs, and her tears flowed again.—"That you—you, Valancourt, would ever fall from my eſteem!"

He was ſilent a moment, as if overwhelmed by the conſciouſneſs of no longer deſerving this eſteem, as well as the certainty of having loſt it, and then, with impaſſioned grief, lamented the criminality of his late conduct and the miſery to which it had reduced him, till, overcome by a recollection of the paſt and a conviction of the future, he burſt into tears, and uttered only deep and broken ſighs.

The remorſe he had expreſſed, and the diſtreſs he ſuffered could not be witneſſed by Emily with indifference, and, had ſhe not called to her recollection all the circumſtances, of which Count De Villefort had informed her, and all he had ſaid of the danger of confiding in repentance, formed under the influence of paſſion, ſhe might, perhaps, have truſted to the aſſurances of her heart, and have forgotten his miſconduct in the tenderneſs which that repentance excited.

Valancourt, returning to the chair beſide her, at length, ſaid, in a calm voice, "'Tis true, I am fallen—fallen from my own eſteem! but could you, Emily, ſo ſoon, ſo ſuddenly reſign, if you had not before ceaſed to love me, or, if your conduct was not governed by the deſigns, I will ſay, the ſelfiſh deſigns of another perſon! Would you not otherwiſe be willing to hope for my reformation—and could you bear, by eſtranging me from you, to abandon me to miſery—to myſelf!"—Emily wept aloud. "No, Emily—no—you would not do this, if you ſtill loved me. You would find your own happineſs in ſaving mine."

"There are too many probabilities againſt that hope," ſaid Emily, "to juſtify me in truſting the comfort of my whole

life to it. May I not alſo aſk, whether you could wiſh me to do this, if you really loved me ?"

"Really loved you !" exclaimed Valancourt—"is it poſſible you can doubt my love ! Yet it is reaſonable, that you ſhould do ſo, ſince you ſee, that I am leſs ready to ſuffer the horror of parting with you, than, that of involving you in my ruin. Yes, Emily, I am ruined, irreparably ruined ! I am involved in debts, which I can never diſcharge !" Valancourt's look, which was wild, as he ſpoke this, ſoon ſettled into an expreſſion of gloomy deſpair ; and Emily, while ſhe was compelled to admire his ſincerity, ſaw, with unutterable anguiſh, new reaſons for fear in the ſuddenneſs of his feelings and the extent of the miſery, in which they might involve him. After ſome minutes, ſhe ſeemed to contend againſt her grief and to ſtruggle for fortitude to conclude the interview. "I will not prolong theſe moments," ſaid ſhe, "by a converſation, which can anſwer no good purpoſe. Valancourt, farewel !"

"You are not going ?" ſaid he, wildly interrupting her, "you will not leave me thus—you will not abondon me even before my mind has ſuggeſted any poſſibility of compromiſe between the laſt indulgence of my deſpair and the endurance of my loſs !" Emily was terrified by the ſternneſs of his look, and ſaid, in a ſoothing voice, "You have yourſelf acknowledged, that it is neceſſary we ſhould part ;—if you wiſh, that I ſhould believe you love me, you will repeat the acknowledgement."—"Never —never," cried he—"I was diſtracted when I made it. O ! Emily, this is too much ; though you are not deceived as to my faults, you muſt be deluded into this exaſperation againſt them. The Count is the barrier between us ; but he ſhall not long remain ſo."

"You are, indeed, diſtracted," ſaid Emily, "the Count is not your enemy ; on the contrary, he is my friend, and that might, in ſome degree, induce you to conſider him as yours." "Your friend !" ſaid Valancourt, haſtily, "how long has he been your friend, that he can ſo eaſily make you forget your lover ? Was it he, who recommended to your favour the Monſieur Du Pont, who, you ſay, accompanied you from Italy, and who, I ſay, has ſtolen your affections ? But I have no right to queſtion you ; you are your own miſtreſs. Du Pont, perhaps, may not long triumph over my fallen fortunes !" Emily, more frightened than before by the frantic looks of Valancourt, ſaid, in a tone ſcarcely audible, "For heaven's ſake be reaſonable, be compoſed. Monſieur Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the

Count his advocate. You have no rival; nor, except yourself, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguish, which must increase while your frantic behaviour shews me, more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accustomed to love."

He made no reply, but sat with his arms rested on the table and his face concealed by his hands; while Emily stood, silent and trembling, wretched for herself and dreading to leave him in this state of mind.

"O excess of misery!" he suddenly exclaimed, "that I can never lament my sufferings, without accusing myself, nor remember you, without recollecting the folly and the vice, by which I have lost you! Why was I forced to Paris, and why did I yield to allurements, which were to make me despicable for ever! O! why cannot I look back, without interruption, to those days of innocence and peace, the days of our early love!" The recollection seemed to melt his heart, and the frenzy of despair yielded to tears. After a long pause, turning towards her and taking her hand, he said, in a softened voice, "Emily, can you bear that we should part, can you resolve to give up a heart, that loves you like mine, an heart, which, though it has erred, widely erred, is not irretrievable from error, as you well know, it never can be retrievable from love?" Emily made no reply but with her tears. "Can you," continued he, "can you forget all our former days of happiness and confidence, when I had not a thought, that I might wish to conceal from you, when I had no taste, no pleasures, in which you did not participate?"

"O do not lead me to the remembrance of those days," said Emily, "unless you can teach me to forget the present; I do not mean to reproach you; if I did, I should be spared these tears; but why will you render your present sufferings more conspicuous, by contrasting them with your former virtues?"

"Those virtues," said Valancourt, "might, perhaps, again be mine, if your affection, which nurtured them, was unchanged; but I fear, indeed, I see, that you can no longer love me; else the happy hours, which we have passed together, would plead for me, and you could not look back upon them unmoved. Yet, why should I torture myself with the remembrance, why do I linger here? Am I not ruined, would it not be madness to involve you in my misfortunes, even if your heart was still my own? I will not distress you further. Yet, before I go," added he, in a solemn voice, "let me repeat, that, whatever may be

my deſtiny, whatever I may be doomed to ſuffer. I muſt always love you, moſt fondly love you! I am going, Emily, I am going to leave you, to leave you, for ever!" As he ſpoke the laſt words, his voice trembled, and he threw himſelf again into the chair, from which he had riſen. Emily was utterly unable to leave the room, or to ſay farewel. All impreſſion of his criminal conduct and almoſt of his follies was obliterated from her mind, and ſhe was ſenſible only of pity and grief.

"My fortitude is gone," ſaid Valancourt at length; "I can no longer even ſtruggle to recall it. I cannot now leave you, I cannot bid you an eternal farewel; ſay, at leaſt, that you will ſee me once again." Emily's heart was ſomewhat relieved by the requeſt, and ſhe endeavoured to believe, that ſhe ought not to refuſe it. Yet ſhe was embarraſſed by recollecting, that ſhe was a viſitor in the houſe of the Count, who could not be pleaſed by the return of Valancourt. Other conſiderations, however, ſoon overcame this, and ſhe granted his requeſt, on the condition, that he would neither think of the Count, as his enemy, nor Du Pont as his rival. He then left her, with a heart ſo much lightened by this ſhort reſpite, that he almoſt loſt every former ſenſe of misfortune.

Emily withdrew to her own room, that ſhe might compoſe her ſpirits and remove the traces of her tears, which would encourage the cenſorious remarks of the Counteſs and her favourite, as well as excite the curioſity of the reſt of the family. She found it, however, impoſſible to tranquillize her mind, from which ſhe could not expel the remembrance of the late ſcene with Valancourt, or the conſciouſneſs, that ſhe was to ſee him again, on the morrow. This meeting now appeared more terrible to her than the laſt, for the ingenuous confeſſion he had made of his ill conduct and his embarraſſed circumſtances, with the ſtrength and tenderneſs of affection, which this confeſſion diſcovered, had deeply impreſſed her, and, in ſpite of all ſhe had heard and believed to his diſadvantage, her eſteem began to return. It frequently appeared to her impoſſible, that he could have been guilty of the depravities reported of him, which, if not inconſiſtent with his warmth and impetuoſity, were entirely ſo with his candour and ſenſibility. Whatever was the criminality, which had given riſe to the reports, ſhe could not now believe them to be wholly true, nor that his heart was finally cloſed againſt the charms of virtue. The deep conſciouſneſs, which he felt as well as expreſſed of his errors, ſeemed to juſtify the opinion; and, as ſhe underſtood not the inſtability of youth-

ful diſpoſitions, when oppoſed by habit, and that profeſſions frequently deceive thoſe, who make, as well as thoſe, who hear them, ſhe might have yielded to the flattering perſuaſions of her own heart and the pleadings of Valancourt, had ſhe not been guided by the ſuperior prudence of the Count. He repreſented to her, in a clear light, the danger of her preſent ſituation, that of liſtening to promiſes of amendment, made under the influence of ſtrong paſſion, and the ſlight hope, which could attach to a connection, whoſe chance of happineſs reſted upon the retrieval of ruined circumſtances and the reform of corrupted habits. On theſe accounts, he lamented, that Emily had conſented to a ſecond interview, for he ſaw how much it would ſhake her reſolution and increaſe, the difficulty of her conqueſt.

Her mind was now ſo entirely occupied by nearer intereſts, that ſhe forgot the old houſekeeper and the promiſed hiſtory, which ſo lately had excited her curioſity, but which Dorothee was probably not very anxious to diſcloſe, for night came, the hours paſſed; and ſhe did not appear in Emily's chamber. With the latter it was a ſleepleſs and diſmal night; the more ſhe ſuffered her memory to dwell on the late ſcenes with Valancourt, the more her reſolution declined, and ſhe was obliged to recollect all the arguments, which the Count had made uſe of to ſtrengthen it, and all the precepts. which ſhe had received from her deceaſed father, on the ſubject of ſelf command, to enable her to act, with prudence and dignity, on this the moſt ſevere occaſion of her life. There were moments, when all her fortitude forſook her, and when, remembering the confidence of former times, ſhe thought it impoſſible, that ſhe could renounce Valancourt. His reformation then appeared certain; the arguments of Count De Villefort were forgotten; ſhe readily believed all ſhe wiſhed, and was willing to encounter any evil rather than that of an immediate ſeparation.

Thus paſſed the night in ineffectual ſtruggles between affection and reaſon, and ſhe roſe, in the morning, with a mind, weakened and irreſolute, and a frame, trembling with illneſs.

CHAP. XLI.

"Come, weep with me;—paſt hope, paſt cure, paſt help!"
ROMEO AND JULIET.

VALANCOURT, meanwhile, ſuffered the tortures of remorſe and deſpair. The ſight of Emily had renewed all the ardour, with which he firſt loved her, and which had ſuffered a temporary abatement from abſence and the paſſing ſcenes of buſy life. When, on the receipt of her letter, he ſet out for Languedoc, he then knew, that his own folly had involved him in ruin, and it was no part of his deſign to conceal this from her. But he lamented only the delay which his ill conduct muſt give to their marriage, and did not foreſee, that the information could induce her to break their connection for ever. While the proſpect of this ſeparation overwhelmed his mind, before ſtung with ſelf reproach, he awaited their ſecond interview, in a ſtate little ſhort of diſtraction, yet was ſtill inclined to hope, that his pleadings might prevail upon her not to exact it. In the morning, he ſent to know at what hour ſhe would ſee him; and his note arrived, when ſhe was with the Count, who had ſought an opportunity of again converſing with her of Valancourt; for he perceived the extreme diſtreſs of her mind, and feared, more than ever, that her fortitude would deſert her. Emily having diſmiſſed the meſſenger, the Count returned to the ſubject of their late converſation, urging his fear of Valancourt's entreaties, and again pointing out to her the lengthened miſery, that muſt enſue, if ſhe ſhould refuſe to encounter ſome preſent uneaſineſs. His repeated arguments could, indeed, alone have protected her from the affection ſhe ſtill felt for Valancourt, and ſhe reſolved to be governed by them.

The hour of interview, at length, arrived. Emily went to it, at leaſt, with compoſure of manner, but Valancourt was ſo much agitated, that he could not ſpeak, for ſeveral minutes, and his firſt words were alternately thoſe of lamentation, entreaty and ſelf reproach. Afterward, he ſaid, "Emily, I have loved you, I do love you better than my life; but I am ruined by my own conduct. Yet I would ſeek to entangle you in a connection, that muſt be miſerable for you, rather than ſubject myſelf to the puniſhment which is my due, the loſs of you. I am a wretch, but I will be a villain no longer. I will not endeavour to ſhake your reſolution by the pleadings of a ſelfiſh paſſion. I reſign you, Emily, and will endeavour to find conſolation in conſider-

ing, that, though I am miſerable, you at leaſt may be happy. The merit of the ſacrifice is, indeed, not my own, for I ſhould never, have attained ſtrength of mind to ſurrender you, if your prudence had not demanded it."

He pauſed a moment, while Emily attempted to conceal the tears, which came to her eyes. She would have ſaid, "You ſpeak now, as you were wont to do," but ſhe checked herſelf—"Forgive me, Emily," ſaid he, "all the ſufferings I have occaſioned you, and ſometimes, when you think of the wretched Valancourt, remember, that his only conſolation would be to believe, that you are no longer unhappy by his folly." The tears now fell faſt upon her cheek, and he was relapſing into the phrenzy of deſpair, when Emily endeavoured to recall her fortitude and to terminate an interview, which only ſeemed to increaſe the diſtreſs of both. Perceiving her tears and that ſhe was riſing to go, Valancourt, ſtruggled, once more, to overcome his own feelings and to ſooth hers. "The remembrance of this ſorrow," ſaid he, "ſhall in future be my protection, O! never again will example, or temptation have power to ſeduce me to evil, exalted as I ſhall be by the recollection of your grief for me."

Emily was ſomewhat comforted by this aſſurance. "We are now parting for ever," ſaid ſhe; "but, if my happineſs is dear to you, you will always remember, that nothing can contribute to it more than to believe, that you have recovered your own eſteem." Valancourt took her hand; his eyes were covered with tears, and the farewel he would have ſpoken was loſt in ſighs. After a few moments, Emily ſaid with difficulty and emotion, "Farewel, Valancourt, may you be happy!" She repeated her "farewel," and attempted to withdraw her hand, but he ſtill held it and bathed it with his tears. "Why prolong theſe moments?" ſaid Emily, in a voice ſcarcely audible, "they are too painful to us both." "This is too, too much," exclaimed Valancourt, reſigning her hand and throwing himſelf into a chair, where he covered his face with his hands, and was overcome, for ſome moments, by convulſive ſighs. After a long pauſe, during which Emily wept in ſilence, and Valancourt ſeemed ſtruggling with his grief, ſhe again roſe to take leave of him. Then, endeavouring to recover his compoſure, "I am again afflicting you," ſaid he, "but let the anguiſh I ſuffer, plead for me." He then added, in a ſolemn voice, which frequently trembled with the agitation of his heart, "Farewel,

Emily, you will always be the only object of my tenderneſs. Sometimes you will think of the unhappy Valancourt, and it will be with pity, though it may not be with eſteem. O! what is the whole world to me, without you, without your eſteem!" He checked himſelf, "I am falling again into the error I have juſt lamented. I muſt not intrude longer upon your patience, or I ſhall relapſe into deſpair."

He once more bade Emily adieu, preſſed her hand to his lips, looked at her, for the laſt time, and hurried out of the room.

Emily remained in the chair, where he had left her, oppreſſed with a pain at her heart, which ſcarcely permitted her to breathe, and liſtening to his departing ſteps, ſinking fainter and fainter, as he croſſed the hall. She was at length rouſed by the voice of the Counteſs in the garden, and, her attention being then awakened, the firſt object which ſtruck her ſight, was the vacant chair, where Valancourt had ſat. The tears, which had been, for ſometime, repreſſed by the kind of aſtoniſhment, that followed his departure, now came to her relief, and ſhe was at length, ſufficiently compoſed to return to her own room.

CHAP. XLII.

"This is no mortal buſineſs, nor no ſound
That the earth owes!"——

SHAKESPEARE.

WE now return to the mention of Montoni, whoſe rage and diſappointment were ſoon loſt in nearer intereſts, than any, which the unhappy Emily had awakened. His depredations having exceeded their uſual limits, and reached an extent, at which neither the timidity of the then commercial ſenate of Venice, nor their hope of his occaſional aſſiſtance would permit them to connive, the ſame effort, it was reſolved, ſhould complete the ſuppreſſion of his power and the correction of his outrages. While a corps of conſiderable ſtrength was upon the point of receiving orders to march for Udolpho, a young officer, prompted partly by reſentment, for ſome injury, received from Montoni, and partly by the hope of diſtinction, ſolicited an interview with the Miniſter who directed the enterpriſe. To him he repreſented, that the ſituation of Udolpho rendered it too ſtrong to be

taken by open force, except after ſome tedious operations; that Montoni had lately ſhewn how capaple he was of adding to its ſtrength all the advantages, which could be derived from the ſkill of a commander; that ſo conſiderable a body of troops, as that allotted to the expedition, could not approach Udolpho without his knowledge, and that it was not for the honour of the republic to have a large part of its regular force employed, for ſuch a time as the ſiege of Udolpho would require, upon the attack of a handful of banditti. The object of the expedition, he thought, might be accompliſhed much more ſafely and ſpeedily by mingling contrivance with force. It was poſſible to meet Montoni and his party, without their walls, and to attack them then; or, by approaching the fortreſs, with the ſecrecy conſiſtent with the march of ſmaller bodies of troops, to take advantage either of the treachery, or negligence of ſome of his party, and to ruſh unexpectedly upon the whole, even in the caſtle of Udolpho.

This advice was ſeriouſly attended to, and the officer who gave it, received the command of the troops, demanded for his purpoſe. His firſt efforts were accordingly thoſe of contrivance alone. In the neighbourhood of Udolpho, he waited, till he had ſecured the aſſiſtance of ſeveral of the condottieri, of whom he found none, that he addreſſed, unwilling to puniſh their imperious maſter, and to ſecure their own pardon from the ſenate. He learned alſo the number of Montoni's troops, and that it had been much increaſed, ſince his late ſucceſſes. The concluſion of his plan was ſoon effected. Having returned with his party, who received the watch word and other aſſiſtance from their friends within, Montoni and his officers were ſurpriſed by one diviſion, who had been directed to their apartment, while the other maintained the ſlight combat, which preceded the ſurrender of the whole garriſon. Among the perſons, ſeized with Montoni, was Orſino, the aſſaſſin, who had joined him on his firſt arrival at Udolpho, and whoſe concealment had been made known to the ſenate by Count Morano, after the unſucceſsful attempt of the latter to carry off Emily. It was, indeed, partly for the purpoſe of capturing this man, by whom one of the ſenate had been murdered, that the expedition was undertaken, and its ſucceſs was ſo acceptable to them, that Morano was inſtantly releaſed, notwithſtanding the political ſuſpicions, which Montoni, by his ſecret accuſation, had excited againſt him. The celerity and eaſe, with which this whole tranſaction was completed, prevented it from attracting curioſity, or even from ob-

taining a place in any of the publiſhed records of that time; ſo that Emily, who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and ſignal humiliation of her late perſecutor.

Her mind was now occupied with ſufferings, which no effort of reaſon had yet been able to controul. Count de Villefort, who ſincerely attempted whatever benevolence could ſuggeſt for ſoftening them, ſometimes allowed her the ſolitude ſhe wiſhed for, ſometimes led her into friendly parties, and conſtantly protected her, as much as poſſible, from the ſhrewd inquiries and critical converſation of the Counteſs. He often invited her to make excurſions, with him and his daughter, during which he converſed entirely on queſtions, ſuitable to her taſte, without appearing to conſult it, and thus endeavoured gradually to withdraw her from the ſubject of her grief, and to awake other intereſts in her mind. Emily, to whom he appeared as the enlightened friend and protector of her youth, ſoon felt for him the tender affection of a daughter, and her heart expanded to her young friend Blanche, as to a ſiſter, whoſe kindneſs and ſimplicity compenſated for the want of more brilliant qualities. It was long before ſhe could ſufficiently abſtract her mind from Valancourt to liſten to the ſtory, promiſed by old Dorothee, concerning which her curioſity had once been ſo deeply intereſted; but Dorothee, at length reminded her of it, and Emily deſired that ſhe would come that night to her chamber.

Still her thoughts were employed by conſiderations, which weakened her curioſity, and Dorothee's tap at the door, ſoon after twelve, ſurpriſed her almoſt as much as if it had not been appointed. "I am come, at laſt, lady," ſaid ſhe; "I wonder what it is makes my old limbs ſhake ſo, to night. I thought once, or twice, I ſhould have dropped, as I was a coming." Emily ſeated her in a chair, and deſired, that ſhe would compoſe her ſpirits, before ſhe entered upon the ſubject, that had brought her thither. "Alas," ſaid Dorothee, "it is thinking of that, I believe, which has diſturbed me ſo. In my way hither too, I paſſed the chamber, where my dear lady died, and every thing was ſo ſtill and gloomy about me, that I almoſt fancied I ſaw her as ſhe appeared upon her death bed."

Emily now drew the chair near to Dorothee, who went on. "It is about twenty years ſince my lady Marchioneſs came a bride to the chateau. O! I well remember how ſhe looked, when ſhe came into the great hall, where we ſervants were all aſſembled to welcome her, and how happy my lord the Marquis ſeemed. Ah! who would have thought then!—But, as I was

ſaying, ma'amſelle, I thought the Marchioneſs, with all her ſweet looks, did not look happy at heart, and ſo I told my huſband, and he ſaid it was all fancy; ſo I ſaid no more, but I made my remarks, for all that. My lady Marchioneſs was then about your age, and, as I have often thought, very like you. Well! my lord the Marquis kept open houſe, for a long time, and gave ſuch entertainments and there were ſuch gay doings as have never been in the chateau ſince. I was younger, ma'amſelle, then, than I am now, and was as gay as the beſt of them. I remember I danced with Philip, the butler, in a pink gown, with yellow ribbons, and a coif, not ſuch as they wear now, but plaited high, with ribbons all about it. It was very becoming truly;—my lord, the Marquis, noticed me. Ah! he was a good natured gentleman then—who would have thought that he!"——

"But the Marchioneſs, Dorothee," ſaid Emily, "you was telling me of her."

"O yes, my lady Marchioneſs, I thought ſhe did not ſeem to be happy at heart, and once, ſoon after the marriage, I caught her crying in her chamber; but, when ſhe ſaw me, ſhe dried her eyes, and pretended to ſmile. I did not dare then to aſk what was the matter; but, the next time I ſaw her crying, I did, and ſhe ſeemed diſpleaſed; ſo I ſaid no more. I found out, ſometime after, how it was. Her father, it ſeems, had commanded her to marry my lord, the Marquis, for his money, and there was another nobleman, or elſe a chevalier, that ſhe liked better and that was very fond of her, and ſhe fretted for the loſs of him, I fancy, but ſhe never told me ſo. My lady always tried to conceal her tears from the Marquis, for I have often ſeen her, after ſhe has been ſo ſorrowful, look ſo calm and ſweet, when he came into the room! But my lord, all of a ſudden, grew gloomy, fretful, and very unkind, ſometimes to my lady. This afflicted her very much, as I ſaw, for ſhe never complained, and ſhe uſed to try ſo ſweetly to oblige him and to bring him into a good humour, that my heart has often ached to ſee it. But he uſed to be ſtubborn, and give her harſh anſwers, and then, when ſhe found it all in vain, ſhe would go to her own room, and cry ſo! I uſed to hear her in the anti room, poor dear lady! but I ſeldom ventured to go to her. I uſed, ſometimes, to think my lord was jealous. To be ſure my lady was greatly admired, but ſhe was too good to deſerve ſuſpicion. Among the many chevaliers, that viſited at the chateau, there was one, that I always thought ſeemed juſt ſuited for my lady; he was ſo courteous, yet ſo ſpirited, and there was ſuch a grace, as it were, in all he did, or ſaid. I always obſerved,

that, whenever he had been there, the Marquis was more gloomy and my lady more thoughtful, and it came into my head, that this was the chevalier ſhe ought to have married, but I never could learn for certain."

"What was the chevalier's name, Dorothee?" ſaid Emily.

"Why that I will not tell even to you, ma'amſelle, for evil may come of it. I once heard from a perſon, who is ſince dead, that the Marchioneſs was not in law the wife of the Marquis, for that ſhe had before been privately married to the gentleman ſhe was ſo much attached to, and was afterwards afraid to own it to her father, who was a very ſtern man; but this ſeems very unlikely, and I never gave much faith to it. As I was ſaying, the Marquis was moſt out of humour, as I thought, when the chevalier I ſpoke of had been at the chateau, and, at laſt, his ill treatment of my lady made her quite miſerable. He would ſee hardly any viſitors at the caſtle, and made her live almoſt by herſelf. I was her conſtant attendant, and ſaw all ſhe ſuffered, but ſtill ſhe never complained.

"After matters had gone on thus, for near a year, my lady was taken ill, and I thought her long fretting had made her ſo; but, alas! I fear it was worſe than that."

"Worſe! Dorothee," ſaid Emily, "can that be poſſible?"

"I fear it was ſo, madam, there were ſtrange appearances! But I will only tell what happened. My lord, the Marquis—"

"Huſh, Dorothee, what ſounds were thoſe?" ſaid Emily.

Dorothee changed countenance, and, while they both liſtened, they heard, on the ſtillneſs of the night, muſic of uncommon ſweetneſs.

"I have ſurely heard that voice before!" ſaid Emily, at length.

"I have often heard it, and at this ſame hour," ſaid Dorothee, ſolemnly, "and, if ſpirits ever bring muſic—that is ſurely the muſic of one!"

Emily, as the ſounds drew nearer, knew them to be the ſame ſhe had formerly heard at the time of her father's death, and, whether it was the remembrance they now revived of that melancholy event, or that ſhe was ſtruck with ſuperſtitious awe, it is certain, ſhe was ſo much affected, that ſhe had nearly fainted.

"I think I once told you, madam," ſaid Dorothee, "that I firſt heard this muſic, ſoon after my lady's death! I well remember the night!"———

"Hark! it comes again!" ſaid Emily, "let us open the window, and liſten."

They did ſo; but, ſoon, the ſounds floated gradually away into diſtance, and all was again ſtill; they ſeemed to have ſunk

among the woods, whoſe tufted tops were viſible upon the clear horizon, while every other feature of the ſcene was involved in the night ſhade, which, however, allowed the eye an indiſtinct view of ſome objects in the garden below.

As Emily leaned on the window, gazing with a kind of thrilling awe upon the obſcurity beneath, and then upon the cloudleſs arch above, enlightened only by the ſtars, Dorothee, in a low voice, reſumed her narrative.

"I was ſaying, ma'amſelle, that I well remember when firſt I heard that muſic. It was one night, ſoon after my lady's death, that I had ſat up later than uſual, and I don't know how it was, but I had been thinking a great deal about my poor miſtreſs, and of the ſad ſcene I had lately witneſſed. The chateau was quite ſtill, and I was in a chamber at a good diſtance from the reſt of the ſervants, and this, with the mournful things I had been thinking of, I ſuppoſe, made me low ſpirited, for I felt very lonely and forlorn, as it were, and liſtened often, wiſhing to hear a ſound in the chateau, for you know, ma'amſelle, when one can hear people moving, one does not ſo much mind, about one's fears. But all the ſervants were gone to bed, and I ſat thinking and thinking, till I was almoſt afraid to look round the room and my poor lady's countenance often came to my mind, ſuch as I had ſeen her when ſhe was dying, and, once or twice, I almoſt thought I ſaw her before me,—when ſuddenly I heard ſuch ſweet muſic! it ſeemed juſt at my window, and I ſhall never forget what I felt. I had not power to move from my chair, but then when I thought it was my dear lady's voice, the tears came to my eyes. I had often heard her ſing, in her lifetime, and to be ſure ſhe had a very fine voice; it had made me cry to hear her many a time, when ſhe has ſat in her oriel, of an evening, playing upon her lute ſuch ſad ſongs, and ſinging ſo. O! it went to ones heart! I have liſtened in the anti chamber, for the hour together, and ſhe would ſometimes ſit playing with the window open, when it was ſummer time till it was quite dark, and when I have gone in, to ſhut it, ſhe has hardly ſeemed to know what hour it was. But, as I ſaid, madam, continued Dorothee, "when firſt I heard the muſic, that came juſt now, I thought it was my late lady's, and I have often thought ſo again, when I have heard it, as I have done at intervals, ever ſince. Sometimes, many months have gone by, but ſtill it has returned."

"It is extraordinary," obſerved Emily, "that no perſon has yet diſcovered the muſician."

"Aye, ma'amſelle, if it had been any thing earthly it would have been diſcovered long ago, but who could have courage to

follow a ſpirit, and if they had, what good could it do?—for ſpirits *you know*, ma'am, can take any ſhape, or no ſhape, and they will be here, one minute, and, the next perhaps, in a quite different place!"

"Pray reſume your ſtory of the Marchioneſs," ſaid Emily, "and acquaint me with the manner of her death."

"I will, ma'am," ſaid Dorothee, "but ſhall we leave the window?"

"This cool air refreſhes me," replied Emily, "and I love to hear it creep along the woods, and to look upon this duſky landſcape. You was ſpeaking of my lord, the Marquis, when the muſic interrupted us."

"Yes, madam, my lord, the Marquis, became more and more gloomy; and my lady grew worſe and worſe, till one night, ſhe was taken very ill, indeed. I was called up, and, when I came to her bed ſide, I was ſhocked to ſee her countenance—it was ſo changed! She looked piteouſly up at me, and deſired I would call the Marquis again, for he was not yet come, and tell him ſhe had ſomething particular to ſay to him. At laſt, he came, and he did, to be ſure, ſeem very ſorry to ſee her, but he ſaid very little. My lady told him ſhe felt herſelf to be dying, and wiſhed to ſpeak with him alone, and then I left the room, but I ſhall never forget his look as I went."

"When I returned, I ventured to remind my lord about ſending for a doctor, for I ſuppoſed he had forgot to do ſo, in his grief; but my lady ſaid it was then too late; but my lord ſo far from thinking ſo, ſeemed to think lightly of her diſorder—till ſhe was ſeized with ſuch terrible pains! O, I never ſhall forget her ſhriek! My lord then ſent off a man and horſe for the doctor, and walked about the room and all over the chateau, in the greateſt diſtreſs; and I ſtaid by my dear lady, and did what I could to eaſe her ſufferings. She had intervals of eaſe, and in one of theſe ſhe ſent for my lord again; when he came, I was going, but ſhe deſired I would not leave her. O! I ſhall never forget what a ſcene paſſed—I can hardly bear to think of it now! my lord was almoſt diſtracted, for my lady behaved with ſo much goodneſs, and took ſuch pains to comfort him, that, if he ever had ſuffered a ſuſpicion to enter his head, he muſt now have been convinced he was wrong. And to be ſure he did ſeem to be overwelmed with the thought of his treatment of her, and this affected her ſo much that ſhe fainted away.

"We then got my lord out of the room; he went into his library, and threw himſelf on the floor, and there he ſtaid, and

would hear no reaſon, that was talked to him. When my lady recovered, ſhe inquired for him, but, afterwards, ſaid ſhe could not bear to ſee his grief, and deſired we would let her die quietly. She died in my arms, ma'amſelle, and ſhe went off as peacefully as a child, for all the violence of her diſorder was paſſed."

Dorothee pauſed, and wept, and Emily wept with her; for ſhe was much affected by the goodneſs of the late Marchioneſs, and by the meek patience, with which ſhe had ſuffered.

"When the doctor came," reſumed Dorothee, "alas! he came too late; he appeared greatly ſhocked to ſee her, for ſoon after her death a frightful blackneſs ſpread all over her face. When he had ſent the attendants out of the room, he aſked me ſeveral odd queſtions about the Marchioneſs, particularly concerning the manner, in which ſhe had been ſeized, and he often ſhook his head at my anſwers, and ſeemed to mean more, than he choſe to ſay. But I underſtood him too well. However, I kept my remarks to myſelf, and only told them to my huſband, who bade me hold my tongue. Some of the other ſervants, however, ſuſpected what I did, and ſtrange reports were whiſpered about the neighbourhood, but nobody dared to make any ſtir about them. When my lord heard that my lady was dead, he ſhut himſelf up, and would ſee nobody but the doctor, who uſed to be with him alone, ſometimes for an hour together; and, after that, the doctor never talked with me again about my lady. When ſhe was burried in the church of the convent, at a little diſtance yonder, if the moon was up you might ſee the towers here, ma'amſelle, all my lord's vaſſals followed the funeral, and there was not a dry eye among them, for ſhe had done a deal of good among the poor. My lord, the Marquis, I never ſaw any body ſo melancholy as he was afterwards, and ſometimes he would be in ſuch fits of violence, that we almoſt thought he had loſt his ſenſes. He did not ſtay long at the chateau, but joined his regiment, and, ſoon after, all the ſervants, except my huſband and I, received notice to go, for my lord went to the wars. I never ſaw him after, for he would not return to the chateau, though it is ſuch a fine place, and never finiſhed thoſe fine rooms he was building on the weſt ſide of it, and it has, in a manner, been ſhut up ever ſince, till my lord the Count came here."

"The death of the Marchioneſs appears extraordinary," ſaid Emily, who was anxious to know more than ſhe dared to aſk.

"Yes, madam," replied Dorothee, "it was extraordinary; I have told you all I ſaw, and you may eaſily gueſs what I think,

I cannot ſay more, becauſe I would not ſpread reports, that might offend my lord the Count."

"You are very right," ſaid Emily;—"where did the Marquis die?"—"In the north of France, I believe, ma'amſelle," replied Dorothee. "I was very glad, when I heard my lord the Count was coming, for this had been a ſad deſolate place, theſe many years, and we heard ſuch ſtrange noiſes, ſometimes, after my lady's death, that as I told you before, my huſband and I left it for a neighbouring cottage. And now, lady, I have told you all this ſad hiſtory, and all my thoughts, and you have promiſed, you know, never to give the leaſt hint about it."—"I have," ſaid Emily, "and I will be faithful to my promiſe, Dorothee;—what you have told has intereſted me more than you can imagine. I only wiſh I could prevail upon you to tell the name of the chevalier, whom you thought ſo deſerving of the Marchioneſs."

Dorothee, however, ſteadily refuſed to do this, and then returned to the notice of Emily's likeneſs to the late Marchioneſs. "There is another picture of her," added ſhe, "hanging in a room of the ſuite, which was ſhut up. It was drawn, as I have heard, before ſhe was married, and is much more like you than the miniature." When Emily expreſſed a ſtrong deſire to ſee this, Dorothee replied, that ſhe did not like to open thoſe rooms; but Emily reminded her that the Count had talked the other day of ordering them to be opened; of which Dorothee ſeemed to conſider much, and then ſhe owned, that ſhe ſhould feel leſs, if ſhe went into them with Emily firſt, than otherwiſe, and at length promiſed to ſhew the picture.

The night was too far advanced and Emily was too much affected by the narrative of the ſcenes, which had paſſed in thoſe apartments, to wiſh to viſit them at this hour, but ſhe requeſted that Dorothee would return on the following night, when they were not likely to be obſerved, and conduct her thither. Beſides her wiſh to examine the portrait, ſhe felt a thrilling curioſity to ſee the chamber, in which the Marchioneſs had died, and which Dorothee had ſaid remained, with the bed and furniture, juſt as when the corpſe was removed for interment. The ſolemn emotions, which the expectation of viewing ſuch a ſcene had awakened, were in uniſon with the preſent tone of her mind, depreſſed by ſevere diſappointment. Cheerful objects rather added to, than removed this depreſſion; but, perhaps, ſhe yielded too much to her melancholy inclination, and imprudently lamented the misfortune, which no virtue of her own could have

taught her to avoid, though no effort of reaſon could make her look unmoved upon the ſelf degradation of him, whom ſhe had once eſteemed and loved.

Dorothee promiſed to return, on the following night, with the keys of the chambers; and then wiſhed Emily, good repoſe, and departed. Emily, however, continued at the window, muſing upon the melancholy fate of the Marchioneſs, and liſtening in awful expectation, for a return of the muſic. But the ſtillneſs of the night remained long unbroken, except by the murmuring ſounds of the woods, as they waved in the breeze, and then by the diſtant bell of the convent, ſtriking one. She now withdrew from the window, and, as ſhe ſat at her bed ſide, indulging melancholy reveries, which the lonelineſs of the hour aſſiſted, the ſtillneſs was ſuddenly interrupted, not by muſic, but by very uncommon ſounds, that ſeemed to come either from the room, adjoining her own, or from one below. The terrible cataſtrophe, that had been related to her, together with the myſterious circumſtances, ſaid to have ſince occurred in the chateau, had ſo much ſhocked her ſpirits, that ſhe now ſunk, for a moment under the weakneſs of ſuperſtition. The ſounds, however, did not return, and ſhe retired to forget in ſleep the diſaſterous ſtory ſhe had heard.

CHAP. XLIII.

"Now it is the time of night,
That, the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his ſprite,
In the church-way path to glide."

SHAKESPEARE.

ON the next night, about the ſame hour as before, Dorothee came to Emily's chamber, with the keys of that ſuite of rooms, which had been particularly appropriated to the late Marchioneſs. Theſe extended along the north ſide of the chateau, forming part of the old building; and, as Emily's room was in the ſouth, they had to paſs over a great extent of the caſtle, and by the chambers of ſeveral of the family, whoſe obſervations Dorothee was anxious to avoid, ſince it might excite inquiry and raiſe reports, ſuch as would diſpleaſe the Count. She, therefore, requeſted, that Emily would wait half an hour, before they ventured forth, that they might be certain all the ſervants were gone to

bed. It was nearly one, before the chateau was perfectly ſtill, or Dorothee thought it prudent to leave the chamber. In this interval, her ſpirits ſeemed to be greatly affected by the remembrance of paſt events, and by the proſpect of entering again upon places, where theſe had occurred, and in which ſhe had not been for ſo many years. Emily too was affected, but her feelings had more of ſolemnity, and leſs of fear. From the ſilence, into which reflection and expectation had thrown them, they, at length, rouſed themſelves, and left the chamber. Dorothee, at firſt, carried the lamp, but her hand trembled ſo much with infirmity and alarm, that Emily took it from her, and offered her arm to ſupport her feeble ſteps.

They had to deſcend the great ſtaircaſe, and, after paſſing over a wide extent of the chateau, to aſcend another which led to the ſuite of rooms they were in queſt of. They ſtepped cautiouſly along the open corridor, that ran round the great hall, and into which the chambers of the Count, Counteſs, and the lady Blanche, opened, and, from thence, deſcending the chief ſtaircaſe, they croſſed the hall itſelf. Proceeding through the ſervants' hall, where the dying embers of a wood fire ſtill glimmered on the hearth, and the ſupper table was ſurrounded by chairs, that obſtructed their paſſage, they came to the foot of the back ſtaircaſe. Old Dorothee here pauſed, and looked around; "Let us liſten," ſaid ſhe, "if any thing is ſtirring; Ma'amſelle, do you hear any voice?" "None," ſaid Emily, "there certainly is no perſon up in the chateau, beſides ourſelves." "No, ma'amſelle," ſaid Dorothee, "but I have never been here at this hour before, and, after what I know, my fears are not wonderful."—"What do you know?" ſaid Emily.—"O ma'amſelle, we have no time for talking now; let us go on. That door on the left is the one we muſt open."

They proceeded, and, having reached the top of the ſtaircaſe, Dorothee applied the key to the lock. "Ah," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe endeavoured to turn it, "ſo many years have paſſed ſince this was opened, that I fear it will not move." Emily was more ſucceſsful, and they preſently entered a ſpacious and ancient chamber.

"Alas!" exclaimed Dorothee, as ſhe entered, "the laſt time I paſſed through this door, I followed my poor lady's corpſe!"

Emily, ſtruck with the circumſtance, and affected by the duſky and ſolemn air of the apartment, remained ſilent, and they paſſed on through a long ſuite of rooms, till they came to one more ſpacious than the reſt, and rich in the remains of faded magnificence.

"Let us reſt here, awhile, madam," ſaid Dorothee, faintly, we are going into the chamber, where my lady died! that door opens into it. Ah, ma'amſelle! why did you perſuade me to come?"

Emily drew one of the maſſy arm chairs with which the apartment was furniſhed, and begged Dorothee would ſit down and try to compoſe her ſpirits.

"How the ſight of this place brings all that paſſed formerly to my mind!" ſaid Dorothee; "it ſeems as if it was but yeſterday ſince all that ſad affair happened!"

"Hark! what noiſe is that?" ſaid Emily.

Dorothee half ſtarting from her chair, looked round the apartment, and they liſtened—but, every thing remaining ſtill, the old woman ſpoke again upon the ſubject of her ſorrow. "This ſaloon, ma'amſelle, was in my lady's time the fineſt apartment in the chateau, and it was fitted up according to her own taſte. All this grand furniture, but you can now hardly ſee what it is for the duſt, and our light is none of the beſt—ah! how I have ſeen this room lighted up in my lady's time!—all this grand furniture came from Paris, and was made after the faſhion of ſome in the Louvre, there, except thoſe large glaſſes, and they came from ſome outlandiſh place, and that rich tapeſtry. How the colours are faded already!—ſince I ſaw it laſt!"

"I underſtood, that was twenty years ago," obſerved Emily.

"Thereabout, madam," ſaid Dorothee, and well remembered, "but all the time between then and now ſeems as nothing. That tapeſtry uſed to be greatly admired at, it tells the ſtories out of ſome famous book, or other, but I have forgot the name."

Emily now roſe to examine the figures it exhibited, and diſcovered, by verſes in the Provencal tongue, wrought underneath each ſcene, that it exhibited ſtories from ſome of the moſt celebrated ancient romances.

Dorothee's ſpirits being now more compoſed, ſhe roſe, and unlocked the door that led into the late Marchioneſs's apartment, and Emily paſſed into a lofty chamber, hung round with dark arras, and ſo ſpacious, that the lamp ſhe held up did not ſhew its extent; while Dorothee, when ſhe entered, had dropped into a chair, where, ſighing deeply, ſhe ſcarcely truſted herſelf with the view of a ſcene ſo affecting to her. It was ſometime before Emily perceived, through the duſk, the bed on which the Marchioneſs was ſaid to have died; when, advancing to the upper end of the room, ſhe diſcovered the high canopied teſter of dark green damaſk, with the curtains deſcending

to the floor in the fashion of a tent, half drawn, and remaining apparently, as they had been left twenty years before; and over the whole bedding was thrown a counterpane, or pall, of black velvet, that hung down to the floor. Emily shuddered, as she held the lamp over it, and looked within the dark curtains, where she almost expected to have seen a human face, and, suddenly remembering the horror she had suffered upon discovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret chamber of Udolpho, her spirits fainted, and she was turning from the bed, when Dorothee, who had now reached it, exclaimed, "Holy Virgin! methinks I see my lady stretched upon that pall—as when last I saw her!"

Emily, shocked by this exclamation looked involuntarily again within the curtains, but the blackness of the pall only appeared; while Dorothee was compelled to support herself upon the side of the bed, and presently tears brought her some relief.

"Ah!" said she, after she had wept awhile, "it was here I sat on that terrible night, and held my lady's hand, and heard her last words, and saw all her sufferings—*here* she died in my arms!"

"Do not indulge these painful recollections," said Emily, "let us go. Shew me the picture you mentioned, if it will not too much affect you."

"It hangs in the oriel," said Dorothee, rising, and going towards a small door near the bed's head, which she opened, and Emily followed with the light, into the closet of the late Marchioness.

"Alas! there she is, ma'amselle," said Dorothee, pointing to a portrait of a lady, "there is her very self! just as she looked when she came first to the chateau. You see, madam, she was all blooming like you, then—and so soon to be cut off!"

While Dorothee spoke, Emily was attentively examining the picture, which bore a strong resemblance to the miniature, though the expression of the countenance in each was somewhat different; but, still she thought she perceived something of that pensive melancholy in the portrait, which so strongly characterised the miniature.

"Pray ma'amselle, stand beside the picture, that I may look at you together," said Dorothee, who, when the request was complied with, exclaimed again at the resemblance. Emily also as she gazed upon it, thought that she had somewhere seen a person very like it, though she could not now recollect who this was.

In this closet were many memorials of the departed Marchioness; a robe and several articles of her dress were scattered

upon the chairs, as if they had juſt been thrown off. On the floor, were a pair of black ſattin ſlippers, and, on the dreſſing table, a pair of gloves and a long black veil, which, as Emily took it up to examine, ſhe perceived was dropping to pieces with age.

"Ah!" ſaid Dorothee, obſerving the veil, "my lady's hand laid it there; it has never been moved ſince!"

Emily, ſhuddering, immediately laid it down again. "I well remember ſeeing her take it off," continued Dorothee, "it was on the night before her death, when ſhe had returned from a little walk I had perſuaded her to take in the gardens, and ſhe ſeemed refreſhed by it. I told her how much better ſhe looked, and I remember what a languid ſmile ſhe gave me; but, alas! ſhe little thought, or I either, that ſhe was to die, that night."

Dorothee wept again, and then, taking up the veil, threw it ſuddenly over Emily, who ſhuddered to find it wrapped round her, deſcending even to her feet, and, as ſhe endeavoured to throw it off. Dorothee intreated that ſhe would keep it on for one moment. "I thought," added ſhe, "how like you would look to my dear miſtreſs in that veil;—may your life ma'amſelle, be a happier one than hers!"

Emily, having diſengaged herſelf from the veil, laid it again on the dreſſing table, and ſurveyed the cloſet, where every object, on which her eye fixed, ſeemed to ſpeak of the Marchioneſs. In a large oriel window of painted glaſs, ſtood a table, with a ſilver crucifix, and a prayer book open; and Emily remembered with emotion what Dorothee had mentioned concerning her cuſtom of playing on her lute in this window, before ſhe obſerved the lute itſelf, lying on a corner of the table, as if it had been careleſsly placed there by the hand, that had ſo often awakened it.

"This is a ſad forlorn place!" ſaid Dorothee, "for, when my dear lady died, I had no heart to put it to rights, or the chamber either; and my lord never came into the rooms after, ſo they remain juſt as they did when my lady was removed for interment."

While Dorothee ſpoke, Emily was ſtill looking on the lute which was a Spaniſh one, and remarkably large; and then, with a heſitating hand, ſhe took it up, and paſſed her fingers over the chords. They were out of tune, but uttered a deep and full ſound. Dorothee ſtarted at their well known tones, and, ſeeing the lute in Emily's hand, ſaid, "This is the lute my lady Marchioneſs loved ſo! I remember when laſt ſhe played

upon it—it was on the night that ſhe died. I came as uſual to undreſs her, and, as I entered the bed chamber, I heard the ſound of muſic from the oriel, and perceiving it was my lady's, who was ſitting there, I ſtepped ſoftly to the door, which ſtood a little open, to liſten; for the muſic, though it was mournful, was ſo ſweet! There I ſaw her, with the lute in her hand, looking upwards, and the tears fell upon her cheeks, while ſhe ſung a veſper hymn, ſo ſoft and ſo ſolemn! and her voice trembled, as it were, and then ſhe would ſtop for a moment, and wipe away her tears, and go on again, lower than before. O! I had often liſtened to my lady, but never heard any thing ſo ſweet as this; it made me cry, almoſt, to hear it. She had been at prayers, I fancy, for there was the book open on the table beſide her—aye, and there it lies open ſtill! Pray, let us leave the oriel, ma'amſelle," added Dorothee, "this is a heart-breaking place!"

Having returned into the chamber, ſhe deſired to look once more upon the bed, when, as they came oppoſite to the open door, leading into the ſaloon, Emily, in the partial gleam, which the lamp threw into it, thought ſhe ſaw ſomething glide along into the obſcurer part of the room. Her ſpirits had been much affected by the ſurrounding ſcene, or it is probable this circumſtance, whether real or imaginary, would not have affected her in the degree it did; but ſhe endeavoured to conceal her emotion from Dorothee, who, however, obſerving her countenance change, inquired if ſhe was ill.

"Let us go," ſaid Emily, faintly, "the air of theſe rooms is unwholeſome;" but, when ſhe attempted to do ſo, conſidering that ſhe muſt paſs through the apartment where the phantom of her terror had appeared, this terror increaſed, and, too faint to ſupport herſelf, ſhe ſat down on the ſide of the bed.

Dorothee, believing that ſhe was only affected by a conſideration of the melancholy cataſtrophe, which had happened on this ſpot, endeavoured to cheer her; and then, as they ſat together on the bed, ſhe began to relate other particulars concerning it, and this without reflecting, that it might increaſe Emily's emotion, but becauſe they were particularly intereſting to herſelf. "A little before my lady's death," ſaid ſhe, "when the pains were gone off, ſhe called me to her, and ſtretching out her hand to me, I ſat down juſt there—where the curtain falls upon the bed. How well I remember her look at the time—death was in it!—I can almoſt fancy I ſee her now.—There ſhe lay, ma'amſelle—her face was upon the pillow there! This black

counterpane was not upon the bed then; it was laid on, after her death, and ſhe was laid out upon it."

Emily turned to look within the duſky curtains, as if ſhe could have ſeen the countenance of which Dorothee ſpoke. The edge of the white pillow only appeared above the blackneſs of the pall, but, as her eyes wandered over the pall itſelf, ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw it move. Without ſpeaking, ſhe caught Dorothee's arm, who, ſurpriſed by the action, and by the look of terror that accompanied it, turned her eyes from Emily to the bed, where, in the next moment ſhe, too, ſaw the pall ſlowly lifted, and fall again.

Emily attempted to go, but Dorothee ſtood fixed and gazing upon the bed; and, at length ſaid—"It is only the wind, that waves it, ma'amſelle; we have left all the doors open; ſee how the air waves the lamp, too.—It is only the wind."

She had ſcarcely uttered theſe words, when the pall was more violently agitated than before; but Emily, ſomewhat aſhamed of her terrors, ſtepped back to the bed, willing to be convinced that the wind only had occaſioned her alarm; when, as ſhe gazed within the curtains, the pall moved again, and, in the next moment, the apparition of a human countenance roſe above it.

Screaming with terror, they both fled, and got out of the chamber as faſt as their trembling limbs would bear them, leaving open doors of all the rooms, through which they paſſed. When they reached the ſtaircaſe, Dorothee threw open a chamber door, where ſome of the female ſervants ſlept, and ſunk breathleſs on the bed; while Emily, deprived of all preſence of mind, made only a feeble attempt to conceal the occaſion of her terror from the aſtoniſhed ſervants; and, though Dorothee, when ſhe could ſpeak, endeavoured to laugh at her own fright, and was joined by Emily, no remonſtrances could prevail with the ſervants, who had quickly taken the alarm, to paſs even the remainder of the night in a room ſo near to theſe terrific chambers.

Dorothee having accompanied Emily to her own apartment, they then began to talk over, with ſome degree of coolneſs, the ſtrange circumſtance, that had juſt occurred; and Emily would almoſt have doubted her own perceptions, had not thoſe of Dorothee atteſted their truth. Having now mentioned what ſhe had obſerved in the outer chamber, ſhe aſked the houſekeeper, whether ſhe was certain no door had been left unfaſtened, by which a perſon might ſecretly have entered the apartments? Dorothee replied, that ſhe had conſtantly kept the keys of the ſeveral doors.

in her own poſſeſſion; that, when ſhe had gone her rounds through the caſtle, as ſhe frequently did, to examine if all was ſafe, ſhe had tried theſe doors among the reſt, and had always found them faſtened. It was, therefore, impoſſible, ſhe added, that any perſon could have got admittance into the apartments; and, if they could—it was very improbable they ſhould have choſe to ſleep in a place ſo cold and forlorn.

Emily obſerved, that their viſit to theſe chambers had, perhaps, been watched, and that ſome perſon, for a frolic, had followed them into the rooms, with a deſign to frighten them, and, while they were in the oriel, had taken the opportunity of concealing himſelf in the bed.

Dorothee allowed, that this was poſſible, till ſhe recollected, that, on entering the apartments, ſhe had turned the key of the outer door, and this, which had been done to prevent their viſit being noticed by any of the family, who might happen to be up, muſt effectually have excluded every perſon, except themſelves, from the chambers; and ſhe now perſiſted in affirming, that the ghaſtly countenance ſhe had ſeen was nothing human, but ſome dreadful apparition.

Emily was very ſolemnly affected. Of whatever nature might be the appearance ſhe had witneſſed, whether human or ſupernatural, the fate of the deceaſed Marchioneſs was a truth not to be doubted; and this unaccountable circumſtance, occurring in the very ſcene of her ſufferings, affected Emily's imagination with a ſuperſtitious awe, to which, after having detected the fallacies at Udolpho, ſhe might not have yielded, had ſhe been ignorant of the unhappy ſtory, related by the houſekeeper. Her ſhe now ſolemnly conjured to conceal the occurrence of this night, and to make light of the terror ſhe had already betrayed, that the Count might not be diſtreſſed by reports, which would certainly ſpread alarm and confuſſion among his family. "Time," ſhe added, "may explain this myſterious affair; meanwhile let us watch the event in ſilence."

Dorothee readily acquieſced; but ſhe now recollected that ſhe had left all the doors of the north ſuite of rooms open, and, not having courage to return alone to lock even the outer one, Emily, after ſome effort ſo far conquered her own fears, that ſhe offered to accompany her to the foot of the back ſtaircaſe, and to wait there while Dorothee aſcended, whoſe reſolution being reaſſured by this circumſtance, ſhe conſented to go, and they left Emily's apartment together.

No ſound diſturbed the ſtillneſs, as they paſſed along the halls and galleries; but, on reaching the foot of the back ſtaircaſe,

Dorothee's reſolution failed again; having, however, pauſed a moment to liſten, and no ſound being heard above, ſhe aſcended, leaving Emily below, and, ſcarcely ſuffering her eye to glance within the firſt chamber, ſhe faſtened the door, which ſhut up the whole ſuite of apartments, and returned to Emily.

As they ſtepped along the paſſage, leading into the great hall, a ſound of lamentation was heard, which ſeemed to come from the hall itſelf, and they ſtopped in new alarm to liſten, when Emily preſently diſtinguiſhed the voice of Annette, whom ſhe found croſſing the hall, with another female ſervant, and ſo terrified by the report, which the other maids had ſpread, that, believing ſhe could be ſafe only where her lady was, ſhe was going for refuge to her apartment. Emily's endeavours to laugh, or to argue her out of theſe terrors, were equally vain, and, in compaſſion to her diſtreſs, ſhe conſented that ſhe ſhould remain in her room during the night.

CHAP. XLIV.

"Hail, mildly-pleaſing ſolitude!
Companion of the wiſe and good—

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Juſt as the dew-bent roſe is born.

But chief when evening ſcenes decay
And the faint landſcape ſwims away,
Thine is the doubtful ſoft decline,
And that beſt hour of muſing thine."

THOMPSON.

EMILY's injunctions to Annette to be ſilent on the ſubject of her terror were ineffectual, and the occurrence of the preceding night ſpread ſuch alarm among the ſervants, who now all affirmed, that they had frequently heard unaccountable noiſes in the chateau, that a report ſoon reached the Count of the north ſide of the caſtle being haunted. He treated this, at firſt, with ridicule, but, perceiving, that it was productive of ſerious evil, in the confuſion it occaſioned among his houſehold, he forbade any perſon to repeat it, on pain of puniſhment.

The arrival of a party of his friends ſoon withdrew his thoughts entirely from this ſubject, and his ſervants had now

little leiſure to brood over it, except, indeed, in the evenings after ſupper, when they all aſſembled in their hall, and related ſtories of ghoſts, till they feared to look round the room; ſtarted, if the echo of a cloſing door murmured along the paſſage, and refuſed to go ſingly to any part of the caſtle.

On theſe occaſions Annette made a diſtinguiſhed figure. When ſhe told not only of all the wonders ſhe had witneſſed, but of all that ſhe had imagined, in the caſtle of Udolpho, with the ſtory of the ſtrange diſappearance of Signora Laurentini, ſhe made no trifling impreſſion on the mind of her attentive auditors. Her ſuſpicions, concerning Montoni, ſhe would alſo have freely diſcloſed, had not Ludovico, who was now in the ſervice of the Count, prudently checked her loquacity, whenever it pointed to that ſubject.

Among the viſitors at the chateau was the Baron de Saint Foix, an old friend of the Count, and his ſon, the Chevalier St. Foix, a ſenſible and amiable young man, who, having in the preceding year ſeen the Lady Blanche, at Paris, had become her declared admirer. The friendſhip, which the Count had long entertained for his father, and the equality of their circumſtances made him ſecretly approve of the connection; but, thinking his daughter at this time too young to fix her choice for life, and wiſhing to prove the ſincerity and ſtrength of the Chevalier's attachment, he then rejected his ſuit, though without forbidding his future hope. This young man now came, with the Baron, his father, to claim the reward of a ſteady affection, a claim, which the Count admitted and which Blanche did not reject.

While theſe viſitors were at the chateau, it became a ſcene of gaiety and ſplendour. The pavilion in the woods was fitted up and frequented, in the fine evenings, as a ſupper room, when the hour uſually concluded with a concert, at which the Count and Counteſs, who were ſcientific performers, and the Chevaliers Henri and St. Foix, with the Lady Blanche and Emily, whoſe voices and fine taſte compenſated for the want of more ſkilful execution, uſually aſſiſted. Several of the Count's ſervants performed on horns and other inſtruments, ſome of which, placed at a little diſtance among the woods, ſpoke, in ſweet reſponſe, to the harmony, that proceeded from the pavilion.

At any other period, theſe parties would have been delightful to Emily; but her ſpirits were now oppreſſed with a melancholy, which ſhe perceived that no kind of what is called amuſement had power to diſſipate, and which the tender, and, frequent-

ly, pathetic, melody of theſe concerts ſometimes increaſed to a very painful degree.

She was particularly fond of walking in the woods, that hung on a promontory, overlooking the ſea. Their luxuriant ſhade was ſoothing to her penſive mind, and, in the partial views, which they afforded of the Mediterranean, with its winding ſhores and paſſing ſails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. The paths were rude and frequently overgrown with vegetation, but their taſteful owner would ſuffer little to be done to them, and ſcarcely a ſingle branch to be lopped from the venerable trees. On an eminence, in one of the moſt ſequeſtered parts of theſe woods, was a ruſtic ſeat, formed of the trunk of a decayed oak, which had once been a noble tree, and of which, many lofty branches ſtill flouriſhing united with beech and pines, to overcanopy the ſpot. Beneath their deep umbrage, the eye paſſed over the tops of other woods, to the Mediterranean, and to the left, through an opening, was ſeen a ruined watch tower, ſtanding on a point of rock, near the ſea, and riſing from among the tufted foliage.

Hither Emily often came alone in the ſilence of evening, and, ſoothed by the ſcenery and by the faint murmur, that roſe from the waves, would ſit, till darkneſs obliged her to return to the chateau. Frequently, alſo, ſhe viſited the watch tower, which commanded the entire proſpect, and, when ſhe leaned againſt its broken walls, and thought of Valancourt, ſhe not once imagined, what was ſo true, that this tower had been almoſt as frequently his reſort, as her own, ſince his eſtrangement from the neighbouring chateau.

One evening, ſhe lingered here to a late hour. She had ſat on the ſteps of the building, watching, in tranquil melancholy, the gradual effect of evening over the extenſive proſpect, till the gray waters of the Mediterranean and the maſſy woods were almoſt the only features of the ſcene, that remained viſible; when, as ſhe gazed alternately on theſe, and on the mild blue of the heavens, where the firſt pale ſtar of evening appeared, ſhe perſonified the hour in the following lines:

SONG OF THE EVENING HOUR.

Laſt of the hours, that track the fading day,
I move along the realms of twilight air,
And hear, remote, the choral ſong decay
Of ſiſter-nymphs, who dance around his car.

Then, as I follow through the azure void,
His partial ſplendour from my ſtraining eye
Sinks in the depths of ſpace ; my only guide
His faint ray dawning on the fartheſt ſky ;

Save that ſweet, lingering ſtrain of gayer hours !
Whoſe cloſe my voice prolongs in dying notes,
While mortals on the green earth own its pow'rs,
As downward on the evening gale it floats.

When fades along the weſt the ſun's laſt beam
As, weary, to the nether world he goes,
And mountain-ſummits catch the purple gleam,
And ſlumbering ocean faint and fainter glows.

Silent upon the globe's broad ſhade I ſteal,
And o'er its dry turf ſhed the cooling dews,
And ev'ry fever'd herb and flow'ret heal,
And all their fragrance on the air diffuſe.

Where'er I move, a tranquil pleaſure reigns ;
O'er all the ſcene the duſky tints I ſend,
That foreſts wild and mountains, ſtretching plains
And peopled towns, in ſoft confuſion blend.

Wide o'er the world I waft the freſh'ning wind,
Low breathing through the woods and twilight vale,
In whiſpers ſoft, that woo the penſive mind
Of him who loves my lonely ſteps to hail.

His tender oaten reed I watch to hear,
Stealing its ſweetneſs o'er ſome plaining rill,
Or ſoothing ocean's wave, when ſtorms are near,
Or ſwelling in the breeze from diſtant hill !

I wake the fairy elves, who ſhun the light ;
When, from their bloſſom'd beds, they ſlily peep,
And ſpy my pale ſtar leading on the night,—
Forth to their games and revelry they leap ;

Send all the priſon'd ſweets abroad in air,
That with them ſlumber'd in the flow'ret's cell ;
Then to the ſhores and moonlight brooks repair,
Till the high larks their matin carol ſwell.

The wood-nymphs hail my airs and temper'd ſhade,
With ditties ſoft and lightly ſportive dance,
On river margin of ſome bow'ry glade,
And ſtrew their freſh buds as my ſteps advance :

But, ſwift I paſs, and diſtant regions trace,
For moonbeams ſilver all the eaſtern cloud,
And day's laſt crimſon veſtage fades apace ;
Down the ſteep weſt I fly from midnight's ſhroud.

The moon was now riſing out of the ſea. She watched its gradual progreſs, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the ſparkling oars, the ſail faintly ſilvered, and the wood tops and the battlements of the watch tower, at whoſe foot ſhe was ſitting, juſt tinted with the rays. Emily's ſpirits were in harmony with this ſcene. As ſhe ſat meditating, ſounds ſtole by her on the air, which ſhe immediately knew to be the muſic and the voice ſhe had formerly heard at midnight, and the emotion of awe, which ſhe felt, was not unmixed with terror, when ſhe conſidered her remote and lonely ſituation. The ſounds drew nearer. She would have riſen to leave the place, but they ſeemed to come from the way ſhe muſt have taken towards the chateau, and ſhe awaited the event in trembling expectation. The ſounds continued to approach, for ſometime, and then ceaſed. Emily ſat liſtening, gazing and unable to move, when ſhe ſaw a figure emerge from the ſhade of the woods and paſs along the bank, at ſome little diſtance before her. It went ſwiftly, and her ſpirits were ſo overcome with awe, that, though ſhe ſaw, ſhe did not much obſerve it.

Having left the ſpot, with a reſolution never again to viſit it alone, at ſo late an hour, ſhe began to approach the chateau, when ſhe heard voices calling her from the part of the wood, which was neareſt to it. They were the ſhouts of the Count's ſervants, who were ſent to ſearch for her; and, when ſhe entered the ſupper room, where he ſat with Henri and Blanche, he gently reproached her with a look, which ſhe bluſhed to have deſerved.

This little occurrence deeply impreſſed her mind, and, when ſhe withdrew to her own room, it recalled ſo forcibly the circumſtances ſhe had witneſſed, a few nights before, that ſhe had ſcarcely courage to remain alone. She watched to a late hour, when, no ſound having renewed her fears, ſhe at length ſunk to repoſe. But this was of ſhort continuance, for ſhe was diſturbed by a loud and unuſual noiſe, that ſeemed to come from the gallery into which her chamber opened. Groans were diſtinctly heard, and immediately after, a dead weight fell againſt her door, with a violence, that threatened to burſt it open. She called loudly to know who was there, but received no anſwer, though at intervals, ſhe ſtill thought ſhe heard ſomething like a low moaning. Fear deprived her of the power to move. Soon after, ſhe heard footſteps in a remote part of the gallery, and as they approached, ſhe called more loudly than before, till the ſteps pauſed at her door. She then diſtinguiſhed the voices of

ſeveral of the ſervants, who ſeemed too much engaged by ſome circumſtance without, to attend to her calls; but, Annette ſoon after entering the room for water, Emily underſtood, that one of the maids had fainted, whom ſhe immediately deſired them to bring into her room, where ſhe aſſiſted to reſtore her. When this girl had recovered her ſpeech, ſhe affirmed, that, as ſhe was paſſing up the back ſtaircaſe, in the way to her chamber, ſhe had ſeen an apparition on the ſecond landing place; ſhe held the lamp low, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe might pick her way, ſeveral of the ſtairs being infirm and even decayed, and it was upon raiſing her eyes, that ſhe ſaw this appearance. It ſtood for a moment in the corner of the landing place, which ſhe was approaching, and then gliding up the ſtairs, vaniſhed at the door of the apartment, that had been lately opened. She heard afterwards a hollow ſound.

"Then the devil has got a key to that apartment," ſaid Dorothee, "for it could be nobody but he; I locked the door myſelf!"

The girl, ſpringing down the ſtairs and paſſing up the great ſtaircaſe, had run with a faint ſcream, till ſhe reached the gallery, where ſhe fell, groaning, at Emily's door.

Gently chiding her for the alarm ſhe had occaſioned, Emily tried to make her aſhamed of her fears; but the girl perſiſted in ſaying, that ſhe had ſeen an apparition, till ſhe went to her own room, whither ſhe was accompanied by all the ſervants preſent, except Dorothee, who, at Emily's requeſt, remained with her during the night. Emily was perplexed, and Dorothee was terrified, and mentioned many occurrences of former times, which had long ſince confirmed her ſuperſtitions; among theſe, according to her belief, ſhe had once witneſſed an appearance, like that juſt deſcribed, and on the very ſame ſpot, and it was the remembrance of it, that had made her pauſe, when ſhe was going to aſcend the ſtairs with Emily, and which had increaſed her reluctance to open the north apartments. Whatever might be Emily's opinions, ſhe did not diſcloſe them, but liſtened attentively to all that Dorothee communicated, which occaſioned her much thought and perplexity.

From this night the terror of the ſervants increaſed to ſuch an exceſs, that ſeveral of them determined to leave the chateau, and requeſted their diſcharge of the Count, who, if he had any faith in the ſubject of their alarm, thought proper to diſſemble it, and, anxious to avoid the inconvenience that threatened him employed ridicule and then argument to convince them they had nothing to apprehend from ſupernatural agency. But fear had rendered their minds inacceſſible to reaſon; and it was now,

that Ludovico proved at once his courage and his gratitude for the kindneſs he had received from the Count, by offering to watch, during a night, in the ſuite of rooms, reputed to be haunted. He feared, he ſaid, no ſpirits, and, if any thing of human form appeared—he would prove that he dreaded that as little.

The Count pauſed upon the offer, while the ſervants who heard it looked upon one another in doubt and amazement, and Annette, terrified for the ſafety of Ludovico, employed tears and entreaties to diſſuade him from his purpoſe.

"You are a bold fellow," ſaid the Count, ſmiling, "Think well of what you are going to encounter, before you finally determine upon it. However, if you perſevere in your reſolution, I will accept your offer, and your intrepidity ſhall not go unrewarded."

"I deſire no reward, your *Excellenza*," replied Ludovico, "but your approbation. Your *Excellenza* has been ſufficiently good to me already; but I wiſh to have arms, that I may be equal to my enemy, if he ſhould appear."

"Your ſword cannot defend you againſt a ghoſt," replied the Count, throwing a glance of irony upon the other ſervants, "neither can bars, or bolts; for a ſpirit you know, can glide through a key hole, as eaſily as through a door."

"Give me a ſword, my lord Count," ſaid Ludovico, "and I will lay all the ſpirits, that ſhall attack me, in the red ſea."

"Well," ſaid the Count, "you ſhall have a ſword and good cheer, too; and your brave comrades here will, perhaps, have courage enough to remain another night in the chateau, ſince your boldneſs will certainly, for this night, at leaſt, confine all the malice of the ſpectre to yourſelf."

Curioſity now ſtruggled with fear in the minds of ſeveral of his fellow ſervants, and, at length, they reſolved to await the event of Ludovico's raſhneſs.

Emily was ſurpriſed and concerned, when ſhe heard of his intention, and was frequently inclined to mention what ſhe had witneſſed in the north apartments to the Count, for ſhe could not entirely diveſt herſelf of fears for Ludovico's ſafety, though her reaſon repreſented theſe to be abſurd. The neceſſity, however, of concealing the ſecret, with which Dorothee had entruſted her, and which muſt have been mentioned with the late occurrence, in excuſe for her having ſo privately viſited the north apartments, kept her entirely ſilent on the ſubject of her apprehenſion; and ſhe tried only to ſooth Annette, who held, that Ludovico was certainly to be deſtroyed; and who was much

leſs affected by Emily's conſolatory efforts, than by the manner of old Dorothee, who often, as ſhe exclaimed Ludovico, ſighed, and threw up her eyes to heaven.

CHAP. XLV.

"Ye gods of quiet, and of ſleep profound!
Whoſe ſoft dominion o'er this caſtle ſways,
And all the widely-ſilent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen diſplays
What never yet was ſung in mortal lays."

THOMPSON.

THE Count gave orders for the north apartments to be opened and prepared for the reception of Ludovico; but Dorothee, remembering what ſhe had lately witneſſed there, feared to obey, and, not one of the other ſervants daring to venture thither, the rooms remained ſhut up till the time when Ludovico was to retire thither for the night, an hour, for which the whole houſehold waited with impatience.

After ſupper, Ludovico by the order of the Count, attended him in his cloſet, where they remained alone for near half an hour, and, on leaving which, his lord delivered to him a ſword.

"It has ſeen ſervice in mortal quarrels," ſaid the Count, jocoſely, "you will uſe it honourably, no doubt, in a ſpiritual one. To morrow, let me hear that there is not one ghoſt remaining in the chateau."

Ludovico received it with a reſpectful bow. "You ſhall be obeyed, my Lord," ſaid he, "I will engage, that no ſpectre ſhall diſturb the peace of the chateau after this night."

They now returned to the ſupper room, where the Count's gueſts awaited to accompany him and Ludovico to the door of the north apartments, and Dorothee being ſummoned for the keys, delivered them to Ludovico, who then led the way, followed by moſt of the inhabitants of the chateau. Having reached the back ſtaircaſe, ſeveral of the ſervants ſhrunk back, and refuſed to go further, but the reſt followed him to the top of the ſtaircaſe, where a broad landing-place allowed them to flock round him, while he applied the key to the door, during which they watched him with as much eager curioſity as if he had been performing ſome magical rite.

Ludovico, unaccuſtomed to the lock, could not turn it, and Dorothee, who had lingered far behind, was called forward, un-

der whoſe hand the door opened ſlowly, and her eye glancing within the duſky chamber, ſhe uttered a ſudden ſhriek, and retreated. At this ſignal of alarm, the greater part of the crowd hurried down the ſtairs, and the Count, Henri and Ludovico were left alone to purſue the inquiry, who inſtantly ruſhed into the apartment, Ludovico with a drawn ſword, which he had juſt time to draw from the ſcabbard, the Count with the lamp in his hand, and Henri carrying a baſket, containing proviſion for the courageous adventurer.

Having looked haſtily round the firſt room, where nothing appeared to juſtify alarm, they paſſed on to the ſecond; and here too all being quiet, they proceeded to a third in a more tempered ſtep. The Count had now leiſure to ſmile at the diſcompoſure, into which he had been ſurpriſed, and to aſk Ludovico in which room he deſigned to paſs the night.

"There are ſeveral chambers beyond theſe, your *Excellenza*," ſaid Ludovico, pointing to a door, "and in one of them is a bed, they ſay. I will paſs the night there, and when I am weary of watching, I can lie down."

"Good;" ſaid the Count, "let us go on. You ſee theſe rooms ſhew nothing, but damp walls and decaying furniture. I have been ſo much engaged ſince I came to the chateau, that I have not looked into them till now. Remember, Ludovico, to tell the houſekeeper, to morrow to throw open theſe windows. The damaſk hangings are dropping to pieces, I will have them taken down, and this antique furniture removed."

"Dear ſir!" ſaid Henri, "here is an arm chair ſo maſſy with gilding, that it reſembles one of the ſtate chairs at the Louvre, more than any thing elſe."

"Yes," ſaid the Count, ſtopping a moment to ſurvey it, "There is a hiſtory belonging to that chair, but I have not time to tell it.—Let us paſs on. This ſuite runs to a greater extent than I had imagined; It is many years ſince I was in them. But where is the bed room you ſpeak of, Ludovico?—theſe are only anti chambers to the great drawing room. I remember them in their ſplendour!"

"The bed, my Lord," replied Ludovico, "they told me, was in a room that opens beyond the ſaloon, and terminates the ſuite."

"O, here is the ſaloon," ſaid the Count, as they entered the ſpacious apartment, in which Emily and Dorothee had reſted. He here ſtood for a moment, ſurveying the reliques of faded grandeur, which it exhibited—the ſumptuous tapeſtry—the long and low ſophas of velvet, with frames heavily carved and gilded—the

floor inlaid with ſmall ſquares of fine marble, and covered in the centre with a piece of very rich tapeſtry work—the caſements of painted glaſs, and the large Venetian mirrors of a ſize and quality, ſuch as at that period France could not make, which reflected, on every ſide, the ſpacious apartment. Theſe had formerly alſo reflected a gay and brilliant ſcene, for this had been the ſtate room of the chateau, and here the Marchioneſs had held the aſſemblies, that made part of the feſtivities of her nuptials. If the wand of a magician could have recalled the vaniſhed groups, many of them vaniſhed even from the the earth! that once had paſſed over theſe poliſhed mirrors, what a varied and contraſted picture would they have exhibited with the preſent! Now, inſtead of a blaze of lights, and a ſplendid and buſy crowd, they reflected only the rays of the one glimmering lamp, which the Count held up, and which ſcarcely ſerved to ſhew the three forlorn figures, that ſtood ſurveying the room, and the ſpacious and duſky walls around them.

"Ah!" ſaid the Count to Henri, awaking from his deep reverie, "how the ſcene is changed ſince laſt I ſaw it! I was a young man, then, and the Marchioneſs was alive and in her bloom; many other perſons were here, too, who are now no more! There ſtood the orcheſtry; here we tripped in many a ſprightly maze—the walls echoing to the dance! Now they reſound only one feeble voice—and even that will, ere long be heard no more! My ſon, remember, that I was once as young as yourſelf, and that you muſt paſs away like thoſe, who have preceded you—like thoſe, who, as they ſung and danced in this once gay apartment, forgot that years are made up of moments, and that every ſtep they took carried them nearer to their graves. But ſuch reflections are uſeleſs, I had almoſt ſaid criminal, unleſs they teach us to prepare for eternity, ſince, otherwiſe they cloud our preſent happineſs, without guiding us to a future one. But enough of this; let us go on."

Ludovico now opened the door of the bed room, and the Count, as he entered, was ſtruck with the funeral appearance, which the dark arras gave to it. He approached the bed, with an emotion of ſolemnity, and, perceiving it to be covered with the pall of black velvet, pauſed; "what can this mean?" ſaid he, as he gazed upon it.

"I have heard, my Lord," ſaid Ludovico, as he ſtood at the feet, looking within the canopied curtains, "that the Lady Marchioneſs de Villeroi died in this chamber, and remained here till ſhe was removed to be buried; and this, perhaps, Signor, may account for the pall."

The Count made no reply, but ſtood for a few moments engaged in thought, and evidently much affected. Then, turning to Ludovico, he aſked him with a ſerious air, whether he thought his courage would ſupport him through the night? "If you doubt this," added the Count, "do not be aſhamed to own it; I will releaſe you from your engagement, without expoſing you to the triumphs of your fellow ſervants."

Ludovico pauſed; pride, and ſomething very like fear, ſeemed ſtruggling in his breaſt; pride, however, was victorious; he bluſhed, and his heſitation ceaſed.

"No, my Lord," ſaid he, "I will go through with what I have begun; and I am grateful for your conſideration. On that hearth I will make a fire, and, with the good cheer in this baſket, I doubt not I ſhall do well."

"Be it ſo," ſaid the Count; "but how will you beguile the tedioufneſs of the night, if you do not ſleep?

"When I am weary, my Lord," replied Ludovico, "I ſhall not fear to ſleep; in the meanwhile I have a book, that will entertain me."

"Well," ſaid the Count, "I hope nothing will diſturb you; but if you ſhould be ſeriouſly alarmed in the night, come to my apartment. I have too much confidence in your good ſenſe and courage, to believe you will be alarmed on ſlight grounds; or ſuffer the gloom of this chamber, or its remote ſituation, to overcome you with ideal terrors. To morrow, I ſhall have to thank you for an important ſervice; theſe rooms ſhall then be thrown open, and my people will be convinced of their error. Good night, Ludovico; let me ſee you early in the morning, and remember what I lately ſaid to you."

"I will, my Lord; good night to your *Excellenza*; let me attend you with the light."

He lighted the Count and Henri through the chambers to the outer door; on the landing place ſtood a lamp, which one of the affrighted ſervants had left, and Henri, as he took it up, again bade Ludovico good night, who, having reſpectfully returned the wiſh, cloſed the door upon them, and faſtened it. Then, as he retired to the bed chamber, he examined the rooms, through which he paſſed, with more minuteneſs than he had done before, for he apprehended, that ſome perſon might have concealed himſelf in them, for the purpoſe of frightening him. No one, however, but himſelf, was in theſe chambers, and, leaving open the doors, through which he paſſed, he came again to

the great drawing room, whoſe ſpaciouſneſs and ſilent gloom ſomewhat awed him. For a moment he ſtood, looking back through the long ſuite of rooms he had quitted, and, as he turned, perceiving a light and his own figure, reflected in one of the large mirrors, he ſtarted. Other objects too were ſeen obſcurely on its dark ſurface, but he pauſed not to examine them, and returned haſtily into the bed room, as he ſurveyed which, he obſerved the door of the oriel, and opened it. All within was ſtill. On looking round, his eye was arreſted by the portrait of the deceaſed Marchioneſs, upon which he gazed, for a conſiderable time, with great attention and ſome ſurpriſe; and then, having examined the cloſet, he returned into the bed room, where he kindled a wood fire, the bright blaze of which revived his ſpirits, which had begun to yield to the gloom and ſilence of the place, for guſts of wind alone broke at intervals this ſilence. He now drew a ſmall table and a chair near the fire, took a bottle of wine, and ſome cold proviſion out of his baſket, and regaled himſelf. When he had finiſhed his repaſt, he laid his ſword upon the table, and, not feeling diſpoſed to ſleep, drew from his pocket the book he had ſpoken of. It was a volume of old Provencal tales. Having ſtirred the fire into a brighter blaze, trimmed his lamp, and drawn his chair upon the hearth, he began to read, and his attention was ſoon wholly occupied by the ſcenes, which the page diſcloſed.

The Count, meanwhile, had returned to the ſupper room, whither thoſe of the party, who had attended him to the north apartment, had retreated, upon hearing Dorothee's ſcream, and who were now earneſt in their inquiries concerning thoſe chambers. The Count rallied his gueſts on their precipitate retreat, and on the ſuperſtitious inclination which had occaſioned it, and this led to the queſtion, Whether the ſpirit, after it has quitted the body, is ever permitted to reviſit the earth; and if it is, whether it was poſſible for ſpirits to become viſible to the ſenſe. The Baron was of opinion, that the firſt was probable, and the laſt was poſſible, and he endeavoured to juſtify this opinion by reſpectable authorities, both ancient and modern, which he quoted. The Count, however, was decidedly againſt him, and a long converſation enſued, in which the uſual arguments on theſe ſubjects were on both ſides brought forward with ſkill, and diſcuſſed with candour, but without converting either party to the opinion of his opponent. The effect of their converſation on their auditors was various. Though the Count had much the ſuperiority of the Baron in point of argument, he had conſiderably

fewer adherents; for that love, ſo natural to the human mind, of whatever is able to diſtend its faculties with wonder and aſtoniſhment, attached the majority of the company to the ſide of the Baron; and, though many of the Count's propoſitions were unanſwerable, his opponents were inclined to believe this the conſequence of their own want of knowledge, on ſo abſtracted a ſubject, rather than that arguments did not exiſt, which were forcible enough to conquer his.

Blanche was pale with attention, till the ridicule in her father's glance called a bluſh upon her countenance, and ſhe then endeavoured to forget the ſuperſtitious tales ſhe had been told in her convent. Meanwhile, Emily had been liſtening with deep attention to the diſcuſſion of what was to her a very intereſting queſtion, and, remembering the appearance ſhe had witneſſed in the apartment of the late Marchioneſs, ſhe was frequently chilled with awe. Several times ſhe was on the point of mentioning what ſhe had ſeen, but the fear of giving pain to the Count, and the dread of his ridicule, reſtrained her; and, awaiting in anxious expectation the event of Ludovico's intrepidity, ſhe determined that her future ſilence ſhould depend upon it.

When the party had ſeparated for the night, and the Count retired to his dreſſing room, the remembrance of the deſolate ſcenes he had lately witneſſed in his own manſion deeply affected him, but at length he was arouſed from his reverie and his ſilence. "What muſic is that I hear?" ſaid he ſuddenly to his valet, "Who plays at this late hour?"

The man made no reply, and the Count continued to liſten, and then added, "That is no common muſician; he touches the inſtrument with a delicate hand; who is it Pierre?"

"My Lord!" ſaid the man, heſitatingly.

"Who plays that inſtrument?" repeated the Count.

"Does not your lordſhip know, then?" ſaid the valet.

"What mean you?" ſaid the Count, ſomewhat ſternly.

"Nothing, my Lord, I meant nothing," rejoined the man ſubmiſſively—"Only——that muſic—goes about the houſe at midnight often, and I thought your lordſhip might have heard it before."

"Muſic goes about the houſe at midnight! Poor fellow!—does nobody dance to the muſic, too?"

"It is not in the chateau, I believe, my Lord; the ſounds come from the woods, they ſay, though they ſeem ſo near; but then a ſpirit can do any thing!"

"Ah, poor follow!" ſaid the Count, "I perceive you are as

ſilly as the reſt of them; to morrow, you will be convinced of your ridiculous error. But hark!—what voice is that?"

"O my Lord! that is the voice we often hear with the muſic."

"Often!" ſaid the Count, "How often, pray? It is a very fine one."

"Why, my Lord, I myſelf have not heard it more than two or three times, but there are thoſe who have lived here longer that have heard it often enough."

"What a ſwell was that!" exclaimed the Count, as he ſtill liſtened, "And now, what a dying cadence! This is ſurely ſomething more than mortal!"

"That is what they ſay, my Lord," ſaid the valet; "they ſay it is nothing mortal, that utters it; and if I might ſay my thoughts"———

"Peace!" ſaid the Count, and he liſtened till the ſtrain died away.

"This is ſtrange!" ſaid he, as he turned from the window, "Cloſe the caſements, Pierre."

Pierre obeyed, and the Count ſoon after diſmiſſed him, but did not ſo ſoon loſe the remembrance of the muſic, which long, vibrated in his fancy in tones of melting ſweetneſs, while ſurpriſe and perplexity engaged his thoughts.

Ludovico, meanwhile, in his remote chamber, heard, now and then, the faint echo of a cloſing door, as the family retired to reſt, and then the hall clock, at a great diſtance, ſtrike twelve. "It is midnight," ſaid he, and he looked ſuſpiciouſly round the ſpacious chamber. The fire on the hearth was now nearly expiring, for his attention having been engaged by the book before him, he had forgotten every thing beſides; but he ſoon added freſh wood, not becauſe he was cold, though the night was ſtormy, but becauſe he was cheerleſs; and, having again trimmed his lamp, he poured out a glaſs of wine, drew his chair nearer to the crackling blaze, tried to be deaf to the wind, that howled mournfully at the caſements, endeavoured to abſtract his mind from the melancholy, that was ſtealing upon him, and again took up his book. It had been lent to him by Dorothee, who had formerly picked it up in an obſcure corner of the Marquis's library, and who having opened it and perceived ſome of the marvels it related, had carefully preſerved it for her own entertainment, its condition giving her ſome excuſe for detaining it from its proper ſtation. The damp corner into which it had fallen, had cauſed the cover to be diſfigured and mouldy, and the leaves to be ſo diſcoloured with ſpots, that it was not without difficulty

the letters could be traced. The fictions of the Provencal writers, whether drawn from the Arabian legends, brought by the Saracens into Spain, or recounting the chivalric exploits performed by the cruſaders, whom the Troubadours accompanied to the eaſt, were generally ſplendid and always marvellous, both in ſcenery and incident; and it is not wonderful, that Dorothee, and Ludovico ſhould be faſcinated by inventions, which had captivated the careleſs imagination in every rank of ſociety, in a former age. Some of the tales, however, in the book now before Ludovico, were of ſimple ſtructure, and exhibited nothing of the magnificent machinery and heroic manners, which uſually characteriſed the fables of the twelfth century, and of this deſcription was the one he now happened to open, which, in its original ſtyle, was of great length, but which may be thus ſhortly related. The reader will perceive, that it is ſtrongly tinctured with the ſuperſtition of the times.

THE PROVENCAL TALE.

"THERE lived, in the province of Bretagne, a noble Baron, famous for his magnificence and courtly hoſpitalities. His caſtle was graced with ladies of exquiſite beauty, and thronged with illuſtrious knights; for the honours he paid to feats of chivalry invited the brave of diſtant countries to enter his liſts, and his court was more ſplendid than thoſe of many princes. Eight minſtrels were retained in his ſervice, who uſed to ſing to their harps romantic fictions, taken from the Arabians, or adventures of chivalry, that befel knights during the cruſades, or the martial deeds of the Baron, their lord; while he, ſurrounded by his knights and ladies, banqueted in the great hall of his caſtle, where the coſtly tapeſtry, that adorned the walls with pictured exploits of his anceſtors, the caſements of painted glaſs, enriched with armorial bearings, the gorgeous banners that waved along the roof, the ſumptuous canopies, the profuſion of gold and ſilver that glittered on the ſideboards, the numerous diſhes, that covered the tables, the number and gay liveries of the attendants, with the chivalric and ſplended attire of the gueſts, united to form a ſcene of magnificence, ſuch as we may not hope to ſee in theſe *degenerate days*.

"Of the Baron, the following adventure is related. One night having retired late from the banquet to his chamber, and diſmiſſed his attendants, he was ſurpriſed by the appearance of a ſtranger of a noble air, but of a ſorrowful and dejected counte-

nance. Believing, that this perſon had been ſecreted in the apartment, ſince it appeared impoſſible he could have lately paſſed the anti room, unobſerved by the pages in waiting, who would have prevented this intruſion on their lord, the Baron, calling loudly for his people, drew his ſword, which he had not yet taken from his ſide, and ſtood upon his defence. The ſtranger ſlowly advancing, told him, that there was nothing to fear; that he came with no hoſtile deſign, but to communicate to him a terrible ſecret, which it was neceſſary for him to know.

"The Baron, appeaſed by the courteous manners of the ſtranger, after ſurveying him, for ſometime, in ſilence, returned his ſword into the ſcabbard, and deſired him to explain the means, by which he had obtained acceſs to the chamber, and the purpoſe of this extraordinary viſit.

"Without anſwering either of theſe inquiries, the ſtranger ſaid, that he could not then explain himſelf, but that, if the Baron would follow him to the edge of the foreſt, at a ſhort diſtance from the caſtle walls, he would there convince him, that he had ſomething of importance to diſcloſe.

"This propoſal again alarmed the Baron, who could ſcarcely believe, that the ſtranger meant to draw him to ſo ſolitary a ſpot, at this hour of the night, without harbouring a deſign againſt his life, and he refuſed to go, obſerving, at the ſame time, that, if the ſtranger's purpoſe was an honourable one, he would not perſiſt in refuſing to reveal the occaſion of his viſit, in the apartment where they were.

"While he ſpoke this, he viewed the ſtranger ſtill more attentively than before, but obſerved no change in his countenance, or any ſymptom, that might intimate a conſciouſneſs of evil deſign. He was habited like a knight, was of a tall and majeſtic ſtature, and of dignified and courteous manners. Still, however, he refuſed to communicate the ſubject of his errand in any place, but that he had mentioned, and, at the ſame time, gave hints concerning the ſecret he would diſcloſe, that awakened a degree of ſolemn curioſity in the Baron, which at length induced him to conſent to follow the ſtranger, on certain conditions.

"Sir knight," ſaid he, "I will attend you to the foreſt, and will take with me only four of my people, who ſhall witneſs our conference."

To this, however, the Knight objected.

"What I would diſcloſe," ſaid he, with ſolemnity, "is to you alone. There are only three living perſons to whom the circumſtance is known; it is of more conſequence to you and

your houſe, than I ſhall now explain. In future years, you will look back to this night with ſatisfaction or repentance, accordingly as you now determine. As you would hereafter proſper —follow me; I pledge you the honour of a knight, that no evil ſhall befall you;—if you are contented to dare futurity—remain in your chamber, and I will depart as I came."

"Sir knight," replied the Baron, "how is it poſſible, that my future peace can depend upon my preſent determination?"

"That is not now to be told," ſaid the ſtranger, "I have explained myſelf to the utmoſt. It is late; if you follow me it muſt be quickly;—you will do well to conſider the alternative."

"The Baron muſed, and, as he looked upon the knight, he perceived his countenance aſſume a ſingular ſolemnity."

[Here Ludovico thought he heard a noiſe, and he threw a glance round the chamber, and then held up the lamp to aſſiſt his obſervation; but not perceiving any thing to confirm his alarm, he took up the book again and purſued the ſtory.]

"The Baron paced his apartment, for ſometime, impreſſed by the laſt words of the ſtranger, whoſe extraordinary requeſt he feared to grant, and feared alſo to refuſe. At length, he ſaid, "Sir knight, you are utterly unknown to me; tell me yourſelf, is it reaſonable, that I ſhould truſt myſelf alone with a ſtranger, at this hour, in a ſolitary foreſt? Tell me, at leaſt, who you are, and who aſſiſted to ſecret you in this chamber."

"The knight frowned at theſe latter words, and was a moment ſilent; then, with a countenance ſomewhat ſtern, he ſaid,

"I am an Engliſh knight; I am called Sir Bevys of Lancaſter,—and my deeds are not unknown at the Holy City, whence I was returning to my native land, when I was benighted in the neighbouring foreſt."

"Your name is not unknown to fame," ſaid the Baron, "I have heard of it." (The Knight looked haughtily.) "But why, ſince my caſtle is known to entertain all true knights, did not your herald announce you? Why did you not appear at the banquet, where your preſence would have been welcomed, inſtead of hiding yourſelf in my caſtle and ſtealing to my chamber, at midnight?"

"The ſtranger frowned, and turned away in ſilence; but the Baron repeated the queſtions.

"I come not," ſaid the Knight, "to anſwer inquiries, but to reveal facts. If you would know more, follow me, and again I pledge the honour of a Knight, that you ſhall return in ſafety. —Be quick in your determination—I muſt be gone."

"After ſome further heſitation, the Baron determined to follow the ſtranger, and to ſee the reſult of his extraordinary requeſt; he, therefore, again drew forth his ſword, and, taking up a lamp, bade the Knight lead on. The latter obeyed, and opening the door of the chamber they paſſed into the anti room, where the Baron, ſurpriſed to find all his pages aſleep, ſtopped, and, with haſty violence, was going to reprimand them for their careleſſneſs, when the Knight waved his hand, and looked ſo expreſſively upon the Baron, that the latter reſtrained his reſentment, and paſſed on.

"The Knight, having deſcended a ſtaircaſe, opened a ſecret door, which the Baron had believed was known only to himſelf, and, proceeding through ſeveral narrow and winding paſſages, came, at length, to a ſmall gate, that opened beyond the walls of the caſtle. Meanwhile, the Baron followed in ſilence and amazement, on perceiving that theſe ſecret paſſages were ſo well known to a ſtranger, and felt inclined to return from an adventure, that appeared to partake of treachery, as well as danger. Then conſidering that he was armed, and obſerving the courteous and noble air of his conductor, his courage returned, he bluſhed, that it had failed him for a moment, and he reſolved to trace the myſtery to its ſource. "He now found himſelf on the heathy platform, before his caſtle, where, looking up, he perceived lights glimmering in the different caſements of the gueſts, who were retiring to ſleep; and while he ſhivered in the blaſt, and looked on the dark and deſolate ſcene around him, he thought of the comforts of his warm chamber, rendered cheerful by the blaze of wood, and felt, for a moment, the full contraſt of his preſent ſituation."

[Here Ludovico pauſed a moment, and looking at his own fire, gave it a brightening ſtir.]

"The wind was ſtrong, and the Baron watched his lamp with anxiety, expecting every moment to ſee it extinguiſhed; but, though the flame wavered, it did not expire, and he ſtill followed the ſtranger, who often ſighed as he went, but did not ſpeak.

"When they reached the borders of the foreſt, the Knight turned, and raiſed his head, as if he meant to addreſs the Baron, but then, cloſing his lips in ſilence, he walked on.

"As they entered, beneath the dark and ſpreading boughs, the Baron, affected by the ſolemnity of the ſcene, heſitated whether to proceed, and demanded how much further they were to go. The Knight replied only by a geſture, and the Baron, with heſitating ſteps and a ſuſpicious eye, followed through an

obſcure and intricate path, till, having proceeded a conſiderable way, he again demanded whither they were going, and refuſed to proceed unleſs he was informed.

"As he ſaid this, he looked at his own ſword, and at the Knight alternately, who ſhook his head, and whoſe dejected countenance diſarmed the Baron, for a moment, of ſuſpicion.

"A little further is the place, whither I would lead you," ſaid the ſtranger; "no evil ſhall befall you—I have ſworn it on the honour of a Knight."

"The Baron, reaſſured, again followed in ſilence, and they ſoon arrived at a deep receſs of the foreſt, where the dark and lofty cheſnuts entirely excluded the ſky, and which was ſo overgrown with underwood, that they proceeded with difficulty. The Knight ſighed deeply as he paſſed, and ſometimes pauſed; and having, at length, reached a ſpot, where the trees crowded into a knot, he turned and, with a terrific look, pointing to the ground, the Baron ſaw there the body of a man, ſtretched at its length, and weltering in blood; a ghaſtly wound was on the forehead, and death appeared already to have contracted the features.

"The Baron, on perceiving the ſpectacle, ſtarted in horror, looked at the Knight for explanation, and was then going to raiſe the body and examine if there were yet any remains of life; but the ſtranger, waving his hand, fixed upon him a look ſo earneſt and mournful, as not only much ſurpriſed him, but made him deſiſt.

"But, what were the Baron's emotions, when, on holding the lamp near the features of the corpſe, he diſcovered the exact reſemblance of the ſtranger-his conductor, to whom he now looked up in aſtoniſhment and inquiry? As he gazed, he perceived the countenance of the Knight change, and begin to fade, till his whole form gradually vaniſhed from his aſtoniſhed ſenſe! While the Baron ſtood, fixed to the ſpot, a voice was heard to utter theſe words:—"

[Ludovico ſtarted, and laid down the book, for he thought he heard a voice in the chamber, and he looked toward the bed, where, however, he ſaw only the dark curtains and the pall. He liſtened, ſcarcely daring to draw his breath, but heard only the diſtant roaring of the ſea in the ſtorm, and the blaſt, that ruſhed by the caſements; when, concluding, that he had been deceived by its ſighings, he took up his book to finiſh the ſtory.]

"While the Baron ſtood, fixed to the ſpot, a voice was heard to utter theſe words:—

"The body of Sir Bevys of Lancaſter, a noble knight of England, lies before you. He was, this night, waylaid and murdered, as he journeyed from the Holy City towards his native land. Reſpect the honour of knighthood and the law of humanity; inter the body in chriſtian ground, and cauſe his murderers to be puniſhed. As ye obſerve, or neglect this, ſhall peace and happineſs, or war and miſery, light upon you and your houſe for ever!"

"The Baron, when he recovered from the awe and aſtoniſhment, into which this adventure had thrown him, returned to his caſtle, whither he cauſed the body of Sir Bevys to be removed; and, on the following day, it was interred, with the honours of knighthood, in the chapel of the caſtle, attended by all the noble knights and ladies, who graced the court of the Baron de Brunne."

Ludovico having finiſhed this ſtory, laid aſide the book, for he felt drowſy, and, after putting more wood on the fire and taking another glaſs of wine, he repoſed himſelf in the arm chair on the hearth. In his dream he ſtill beheld the chamber where he really was, and, once or twice, ſtarted from imperfect ſlumbers, imagining he ſaw a man's face, looking over the high back of his arm chair. This idea had ſo ſtrongly impreſſed him, that, when he raiſed his eyes, he almoſt expected to meet other eyes, fixed upon his own, and he quitted his ſeat and looked behind the chair, before he felt perfectly convinced, that no perſon was there.—Thus cloſed the hour.

CHAP. XLVI.

"Enjoy the honey heavy dew of ſlumber:
Thou haſt no figures, nor no fantaſies,
Which buſy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou ſleep'ſt ſo ſound."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Count, who had ſlept little during the night, roſe early, and, anxious to ſpeak with Ludovico, went to the north apartment; but, the outer door having been faſtened, on the preceding night, he was obliged to knock loudly for admittance. Neither the knocking, or his voice was heard; but, conſidering the diſtance of this door from the bed room, and that Ludovico, wearied with watching, had probably fallen into a deep ſleep, the Count was not ſurpriſed on receiving no anſwer, and, leaving the door, he went down to walk in his grounds.

It was a gray autumnal morning. The ſun, riſing over Provence, gave only a feeble light, as his rays ſtruggled through the vapours that aſcended from the ſea, and floated heavily over the wood tops, which were now varied with many a mellow tint of autumn. The ſtorm was paſſed, but the waves were yet violently agitated, and their courſe was traced by long lines of foam, while not a breeze fluttered in the ſails of the veſſels, near the ſhore, that were weighing anchor to depart. The ſtill gloom of the hour was pleaſing to the Count, and he purſued his way through the woods, ſunk in deep thought.

Emily alſo roſe at an early hour, and took her cuſtomary walk along the brow of the promontory, that overhung the Mediterranean. Her mind was now not occupied with the occurrences of the chateau, and Valancourt was the ſubject of her mournful thoughts; whom ſhe had not yet taught herſelf to conſider with indifference, though her judgment conſtantly reproached her for the affection, that lingered in her heart, after her eſteem for him was departed. Remembrance frequently gave her his parting look and the tones of his voice, when he had bade her a laſt farewel; and, ſome accidental aſſociations now recalling theſe circumſtances to her fancy, with peculiar energy, ſhe ſhed bitter tears to the recollection.

Having reached the watch tower, ſhe ſeated herſelf on the broken ſteps, and, in melancholy dejection, watched the waves, half hid in vapour, as they came rolling towards the ſhore, and threw up their light ſpray round the rocks below. Their hollow murmur and the obſcuring miſts, that came in wreaths up the cliffs, gave a ſolemnity to the ſcene, which was in harmony with the temper of her mind, and ſhe ſat, given up to the remembrance of paſt times, till this became too painful, and ſhe abruptly quitted the place. On paſſing the little gate of the watch tower, ſhe obſerved letters, engraved on the ſtone poſtern, which ſhe pauſed to examine, and, though they appeared to have been rudely cut with a penknife, the characters were familiar to her; at length, recognizing the hand writing of Valancourt, ſhe read, with trembling anxiety, the following lines, entitled

SHIPWRECK.

'Tis ſolemn midnight! On this lonely ſteep,
Beneath this watch-tower's deſolated wall,
Where myſtic ſhapes the wonderer appall,
I reſt; and view below the deſart deep,
As through tempeſtuous clouds the moon's cold light
Gleams on the wave. Viewleſs, the winds of night

With loud myſterious force the billows ſweep,
And ſullen roar the ſurges, far below.
In the ſtill pauſes of the guſt I hear
The voice of ſpirits, riſing ſweet and ſlow,
And oft among the clouds their forms appear.
But hark! what ſhriek of death comes in the gale,
And in the diſtant ray what glimmering ſail
Bends to the ſtorm?—Now ſinks the note of fear!
Ah! wretched mariners!—no more ſhall day
Unclоſe his cheering eye to light ye on your way!

From theſe lines it appeared, that Valancourt had viſited the tower; that he had probably been here on the preceding night, for it was ſuch an one as they deſcribed, and that he had left the building very lately, ſince it had not long been light, and without light it was impoſſible theſe letters could have been cut. It was thus even probable, that he might be yet in the gardens.

As theſe reflections paſſed rapidly over the mind of Emily, they called up a variety of contending emotions, that almoſt overcame her ſpirits; but her firſt impulſe was to avoid him, and, immediately leaving the tower, ſhe returned, with haſty ſteps, towards the chateau. As ſhe paſſed along, ſhe remembered the muſic ſhe had lately heard near the tower, with the figure, which had appeared, and, in this moment of agitation, ſhe was inclined to believe, that ſhe had then heard and ſeen Valancourt; but other recollections ſoon convinced her of her error. On turning into a thicker part of the woods, ſhe perceived a perſon walking ſlowly in the gloom at ſome little diſtance, and, her mind engaged by the idea of him, ſhe ſtarted and pauſed, imagining this to be Valancourt. The perſon advanced with quicker ſteps, and, before ſhe could recover recollection enough to avoid him, he ſpoke, and ſhe then knew the voice of the Count, who expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe, on finding her walking at ſo early an hour, and made a feeble effort to rally her on her love of ſolitude. But he ſoon perceived this to be more a ſubject of concern than of light laughter, and, changing his manner, affectionately expoſtulated with Emily, on thus indulging unavailing regret; who, though ſhe acknowledged the juſtneſs of all he ſaid, could not reſtrain her tears, while ſhe did ſo, and he preſently quitted the topic. Expreſſing ſurpriſe at not having yet heard from his friend, the Advocate at Avignon, in anſwer to the queſtions propoſed to him, reſpecting the eſtates of the late Madame Montoni, he, with friendly zeal, endeavoured to cheer Emily with hopes of eſtabliſhing her claim to them; while ſhe felt, that the eſtates could now contribute little to the happineſs of a life, in which Valancourt had no longer an intereſt.

When they returned to the chateau, Emily retired to her apartment, and Count de Villefort to the door of the north chambers. This was ſtill faſtened, but, being now determined to arouſe Ludovico, he renewed his calls more loudly than before, after which a total ſilence enſued, and the Count, finding all his efforts to be heard ineffectual, at length began to fear, that ſome accident had befallen Ludovico, whom terror of an imaginary being might have deprived of his ſenſes. He, therefore, left the door with an intention of ſummoning his ſervants to force it open, ſome of whom he now heard moving in the lower part of the chateau.

To the Count's inquiries, whether they had ſeen or heard Ludovico, they replied in affright, that not one of them had ventured on the north ſide of the chateau, ſince the preceding night.

"He ſleeps ſoundly then," ſaid the Count, "and is at ſuch a diſtance from the outer door, which is faſtened, that to gain admittance to the chambers it will be neceſſary to force it. Bring an inſtrument, and follow me."

The ſervants ſtood mute and dejected, and it was not till nearly all the houſehold were aſſembled, that the Count's orders were obeyed. In the mean time Dorothee was telling of a door that opened from a gallery, leading from the great ſtaircaſe into the laſt anti room of the ſaloon, and this being much nearer to the bed chamber, it appeared probable, that Ludovico might eaſily be awakened by an attempt to open it. Thither, therefore the Count went, but his voice was as ineffectual at this door as it had proved at the remoter one; and now, ſeriouſly intereſted for Ludovico, he was himſelf going to ſtrike upon the door with the inſtrument, when he obſerved its ſingular beauty, and withheld the blow. It appeared, on the firſt glance, to be of ebony, ſo dark and cloſe was its grain and ſo high its poliſh; but it proved to be only of larch wood of the growth of Provence, then famous for its foreſts of larch. The beauty of its poliſhed hue, and of its delicate carvings determined the Count to ſpare this door, and he returned to that leading from the back ſtaircaſe, which being at length forced, he entered the firſt anti room, followed by Henri and a few of the moſt courageous of his ſervants, the reſt awaiting the event of the inquiry on the ſtairs and landing place.

All was ſilent in the chambers, through which the Count paſſed, and, having reached the ſaloon, he called loudly upon Ludovico; after which, ſtill receiving no anſwer, he threw open the door of the bed room, and entered.

The profound ſtillneſs within confirmed his apprehenſions for Ludovico, for not even the breathings of a perſon in ſleep were heard; and his uncertainty was not ſoon terminated, ſince, the ſhutters being all cloſed, the chamber was too dark for any object to be diſtinguiſhed in it.

The Count bade a ſervant open them, who, as he croſſed the room to do ſo, ſtumbled over ſomething, and fell to the floor, when his cry occaſioned ſuch panic among the few of his fellows, who had ventured thus far, that they inſtantly fled, and the Count and Henri were left to finiſh the adventure.

Henri then ſprung acroſs the room, and opening a window ſhutter, they perceived, that the man had fallen over a chair near the hearth, in which Ludovico had been ſitting;—for he ſat there no longer, nor could any where be ſeen by the imperfect light that was admitted into the apartment. The Count, ſeriouſly alarmed, now opened other ſhutters, that he might be enabled to examine further, and, Ludovico not yet appearing, he ſtood for a moment, ſuſpended in aſtoniſhment and ſcarcely truſting his ſenſes, till, his eyes glancing on the bed, he advanced to examine whether he was there aſleep. No perſon, however, was in it, and he proceeded to the oriel, where every thing remained as on the preceding night, but Ludovico was no where to be found.

The Count now checked his amazement, conſidering that Ludovico might have left the chambers, during the night, overcome by the terrors, which their lonely deſolation and the recollected reports, concerning them, had inſpired. Yet if this had been the fact, the man would naturally have ſought ſociety, and his fellow ſervants had all declared they had not ſeen him; the door of the outer room alſo had been found faſtened, with the key on the inſide; it was impoſſible, therefore, for him to have paſſed through that, and all the outer doors of this ſuite were found, on examination, to be bolted and locked, with the keys alſo within them. The Count, being then compelled to believe, that the lad had eſcaped through the caſements, next examined them, but ſuch as opened wide enough to admit the body of a man, were found to be carefully ſecured either by iron bars, or by ſhutters, and no veſtige appeared of any perſon having attempted to paſs them; neither was it probable, that Ludovico would have incurred the riſk of breaking his neck, by leaping from a window, when he might have walked ſafely through a door.

The Count's amazement did not admit of words; but he returned once more to examine the bed room, where was no ap-

pearance of diſorder, except that occaſioned by the late overthrow of the chair near which had ſtood a ſmall table, and on this Ludovico's ſword, his lamp, the book he had been reading, and the remnant of his flaſk of wine ſtill remained. At the foot of the table, too, was the baſket with ſome fragments of proviſion and wood.

Henri and the ſervant now uttered their aſtoniſhment without reſerve, and, though the Count ſaid little, there was a ſerioufneſs in his manner, that expreſſed much. It appeared that Ludovico muſt have quitted theſe rooms by ſome concealed paſſage, for the Count could not believe that any ſupernatural means had occaſioned this event, yet, if there was any ſuch paſſage, it ſeemed inexplicable why he ſhould retreat through it, and it was equally ſurpriſing, that not even the ſmalleſt veſtige ſhould appear, by which his progreſs could be traced. In the rooms every thing remained as much in order as if he had juſt walked out by the common way.

The Count himſelf aſſiſted in lifting the arras, with which the bed chamber, ſaloon and one of the anti rooms were hung, that he might diſcover if any door had been concealed behind it; but, after a laborious ſearch, none was found, and he, at length, quitted the apartments, having ſecured the door of the laſt anti chamber, the key of which he took into his own poſſeſſion. He then gave orders, that ſtrict ſearch ſhould be made for Ludovico not only in the chateau, but in the neighbourhood, and retiring with Henri to his cloſet, they remained there, in converſation for a conſiderable time, and whatever was the ſubject of it, Henri from this hour loſt much of his vivacity, and his manners were particularly grave and reſerved, whenever the topic which now agitated the Count's family with wonder and alarm, was introduced.

On the diſappearing of Ludovico, Baron St. Foix ſeemed ſtrengthened in all his former opinions concerning the probability of apparitions, though it was difficult to diſcover what connection there could poſſibly be between the two ſubjects, or to account for this effect otherwiſe than by ſuppoſing, that the myſtery attending Ludovico, by exciting awe and curioſity, reduced the mind to a ſtate of ſenſibility, which rendered it more liable to the influence of ſuperſtition in general. It is, however, certain, that from this period the Baron and his adherents became more bigoted to their own ſyſtems than before, while the terrors of the Count's ſervants increaſed to an exceſs that occaſioned many of them to quit the manſion immediately, and the reſt remained only till others could be procured to ſupply their places.

The moſt ſtrenuous ſearch after Ludovico proved unſucceſsful, and after ſeveral days of indefatigable inquiry, poor Annette gave herſelf up to deſpair, and the other inhabitants of the chateau to amazement.

Emily, whoſe mind had been deeply affected by the diſaſterous fate of the late Marchioneſs and with the myſterious connection, which ſhe fancied had exiſted between her and St. Aubert, was particularly impreſſed by the late extraordinary event, and much concerned for the loſs of Ludovico, whoſe integrity and faithful ſervices claimed both her eſteem and gratitude. She was now very deſirous to return to the quiet retirement of her convent, but every hint of this was received with real ſorrow by the Lady Blanche, and affectionately ſet aſide by the Count, for whom ſhe felt much of the reſpectful love and admiration of a daughter, and to whom, by Dorothee's conſent, ſhe at length, mentioned the appearance, which they had witneſſed in the chamber of the deceaſed Marchioneſs. At any other period he would have ſmiled at ſuch a relation, and have believed that its object had exiſted only in the diſtempered fancy of the relater; but he now attended to Emily with ſerioufneſs, and when ſhe concluded, requeſted of her a promiſe, that this occurrence ſhould reſt in ſilence.

"Whatever may be the cauſe and the import of theſe extraordinary occurrences," added the Count, "time only can explain them. I ſhall keep a wary eye upon all that paſſes in the chateau, and ſhall purſue every poſſible means of diſcovering the fate of Ludovico. Meanwhile, we muſt be prudent and be ſilent. I will myſelf watch in the north chambers, but of this we will ſay nothing, till the night arrives, when I purpoſe doing ſo."

The Count then ſent for Dorothee, and required of her alſo a promiſe of ſilence, concerning what ſhe had already or might in future witneſs of an extraordinary nature; and this ancient ſervant now related to him the particulars of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi's death, with ſome of which he appeared to be already acquainted, while by others he was evidently ſurpriſed and agitated. After liſtening to this narrative, the Count retired to his cloſet, where he remained alone for ſeveral hours; and, when he again appeared, the ſolemnity of his manner ſurpriſed and alarmed Emily, but ſhe gave no utterance to her thoughts.

On the week following the diſappearance of Ludovico, all the Count's gueſts took leave of him, except the Baron, his ſon Monſ. St. Foix, and Emily; the latter of whom was ſoon after embarraſſed and diſtreſſed by the arrival of another viſitor, Monſ.

Du Pont, which made her determine upon withdrawing to her convent immediately. The delight that appeared in his countenance, when he met her, told that he brought back the ſame ardour of paſſion which had formerly baniſhed him from Chateau-le-Blanc. He was received with reſerve by Emily, and with pleaſure by the Count, who preſented him to her with a ſmile, that ſeemed intended to plead his cauſe, and who did not hope the leſs for his friend, from the embarraſſment ſhe betrayed.

But M. Du Pont, with truer ſympathy ſeemed to underſtand her manner, and his countenance quickly loſt its vivacity and ſunk into the languor of deſpondency.

On the following day, however, he ſought an opportunity of declaring the purport of his viſit, and renewed his ſuit; a declaration, which was received with real concern by Emily, who endeavoured to leſſen the pain ſhe might inflict by a ſecond rejection, with aſſurances of eſteem and friendſhip; yet ſhe left him in a ſtate of mind, that claimed and excited her tendereſt compaſſion; and being more ſenſible than ever of the impropriety of remaining longer at the chateau, ſhe immediately ſought the Count, and communicated to him her intention of returning to the convent.

"My dear Emily," ſaid he, "I obſerve, with extreme concern, the illuſion you are encouraging—an illuſion common to young and ſenſible minds. Your heart has received a ſevere ſhock; you believe you can never entirely recover it, and you will encourage this belief, till the habit of indulging ſorrow will ſubdue the ſtrength of your mind, and diſcolour your future views with melancholy and regret. Let me diſſipate this illuſion, and awaken you to a ſenſe of your danger."

Emily ſmiled mournfully, "I know what you would ſay, my dear ſir," ſaid ſhe, "and am prepared to anſwer you. I feel, that my heart can never know a ſecond affection; and that I muſt never hope even to recover its tranquillity—if I ſuffer myſelf to enter into a ſecond engagement."

"I know, that you feel all this," replied the Count; "and I know, alſo, that time will overcome theſe feelings, unleſs you cheriſh them in ſolitude, and, pardon me, with romantic tenderneſs. Then, indeed, time will only confirm habit. I am particularly empowered to ſpeak on this ſubject, and to ſympathize in your ſufferings," added the Count, with an air of ſolemnity, "for I have known what it is to love, and to lament the object of my love. Yes," continued he, while his eyes filled with tears, "I have ſuffered!—but thoſe times have paſſed away——long paſſed! and I can now look back upon them without emotion."

"My dear sir," said Emily, timidly, "what mean those tears? they speak, I fear, another language—they plead for me."

"They are weak tears, for they are useless ones," replied the Count, drying them, "I would have you superior to such weakness. These, however, are only faint traces of a grief, which, if it not had been opposed by long continued effort, might have led me to the verge of madness! Judge, then, whether I have not cause to warn you of an indulgence, which may produce so terrible an effect, and which must certainly, if not opposed, overcloud the years, that otherwise might be happy. M. Du Pont is a sensible and amiable man, who has long been tenderly attached to you; his family and fortune are unexceptionable;—after what I have said, it is unnecessary to add, that I should rejoice in your felicity, and that I think M. Du Pont would promote it. Do not weep, Emily," continued the Count, taking her hand, "there *is* happiness reserved for you."

He was silent a moment; and then added, in a firmer voice, "I do not wish that you should make a violent effort to overcome your feelings; all I, at present, ask, is, that you will check the thoughts, that would lead you to a remembrance of the past; that you will suffer your mind to be engaged by present objects; that you will allow yourself to believe it possible you may yet be happy; and that you will sometimes think with complacency of poor Du Pont, and not condemn him to the state of despondency, from which, my dear Emily, I am endeavouring to withdraw you."

"Ah! my dear sir," said Emily, while her tears still fell, "do not suffer the benevolence of your wishes to mislead Monsr. Du Pont with an expectation that I can ever accept his hand. If I understand my own heart, this can never be; your instruction I can obey in almost every other particular, than that of adopting a contrary belief."

"Leave me to understand your heart," replied the Count, with a faint smile. "If you pay me the compliment to be guided by my advice in other instances, I will pardon your incredulity, respecting your future conduct towards Monsr. Du Pont. I will not even press you to remain longer at the chateau than your own satisfaction will permit; but though I forbear to oppose your present retirement, I shall urge the claims of friendship for your future visits."

Tears of gratitude mingled with those of tender regret, while Emily thanked the Count for the many instances of friendship she had received from him; promised to be directed by his advice upon every subject but one, and assured him of the

pleaſure, with which ſhe ſhould, at ſome future period, accept the invitation of the Counteſs and himſelf—if Monſ. Du Pont was not at the chateau.

The Count ſmiled at this condition. "Be it ſo," ſaid he, "meanwhile the convent is ſo near the chateau, that my daughter and I ſhall often viſit you; and if, ſometimes we ſhould dare to bring you another viſitor—will you forgive us?"

Emily looked diſtreſſed, and remained ſilent.

"Well," rejoined the Count, "I will purſue this ſubject no further, and muſt now entreat your forgiveneſs for having preſſed it thus far. You will, however, do me the juſtice to believe, that I have been urged only by a ſincere regard for your happineſs, and that of my amiable friend Monſ. Du Pont."

Emily, when ſhe left the Count, went to mention her intended departure to the Counteſs, who oppoſed it with polite expreſſions of regret; after which, ſhe ſent a note to acquaint the lady abbeſs, that ſhe ſhould return to the convent; and thither ſhe withdrew on the evening of the following day. M. Du Pont, in extreme regret, ſaw her depart, while the Count endeavoured to cheer him with a hope, that Emily would ſometimes regard him with a more favourable eye.

She was pleaſed to find herſelf once more in the tranquil retirement of the convent, where ſhe experienced a renewal of all the maternal kindneſs of the abbeſs, and of the ſiſterly attentions of the nuns. A report of the late extraordinary occurrence at the chateau had already reached them, and, after ſupper, on the evening of her arrival, it was the ſubject of converſation in the convent parlour, where ſhe was requeſted to mention ſome particulars of that unaccountable event. Emily was guarded in her converſation, on this ſubject, and briefly related a few circumſtances concerning Ludovico, whoſe diſappearance, her auditors almoſt unanimouſly agreed, had been effected by ſupernatural means.

"A belief had ſo long prevailed," ſaid a nun, who was called ſiſter Frances, "that the chateau was haunted, that I was ſurpriſed, when I heard the Count had the temerity to inhabit it. Its former poſſeſſor, I fear, had ſome deed of conſcience to atone for; let us hope that the virtues of its preſent owner will preſerve him from the puniſhment due to the errors of the laſt, if, indeed, he was criminal."

"Of what crime, then, was he ſuſpected?" ſaid a Mademoiſelle Feydeau, a boarder at the convent.

"Let us pray for his ſoul!" ſaid a nun, who had till now ſat in ſilent attention. "If he was criminal, his puniſhment in this world was ſufficient."

There was a mixture of wildneſs and ſolemnity in her manner of delivering this, which ſtruck Emily exceedingly; but Mademoiſelle repeated her queſtion, without noticing the ſolemn eagerneſs of the nun.

"I dare not preſume to ſay what was his crime," replied ſiſter Frances; "but I have heard many reports of an extraordinary nature, reſpecting the late Marquis de Villeroi, and among others, that, ſoon after the death of his lady, he quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, and never afterwards returned to it. I was not here at the time, ſo I can only mention it from report, and ſo many years have paſſed ſince the Marchioneſs died, that few of our ſiſterhood, I believe, can do more."

"But I can," ſaid the nun, who had before ſpoke, and whom they called ſiſter Agnes.

"You then," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, "are poſſibly acquainted with circumſtances, that enable you to judge, whether he was criminal or not, and what was the crime imputed to him."

"I am," replied the nun; "but who ſhall dare to ſcrutinize my thoughts—who ſhall dare to pluck out my opinion? God only is his judge, and to that judge he is gone!"

Emily looked with ſurpriſe at ſiſter Frances, who returned her a ſignificant glance.

"I only requeſted your opinion," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, mildly; "if the ſubject is diſpleaſing to you, I will drop it."

"Diſpleaſing!"—ſaid the nun, with emphaſis.—"We are idle talkers; we do not weigh the meaning of the words we uſe; *diſpleaſing* is a poor word. I will go pray." As ſhe ſaid this ſhe roſe from her ſeat, and with a profound ſigh quitted the room.

"What can be the meaning of this?" ſaid Emily, when ſhe was gone.

"It is nothing extraordinary," replied ſiſter Frances, "ſhe is often thus; but ſhe has no meaning in what ſhe ſays. Her intellects are at times deranged. Did you never ſee her thus before?"

"Never," ſaid Emily. "I have, indeed, ſometimes, thought, that there was the melancholy of madneſs in her look, but never before perceived it in her ſpeech. Poor ſoul I will pray for her!"

"Your prayers then, my daughter, will unite with ours," obſerved the lady abbeſs, "ſhe has need of them."

"Dear Lady," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, addreſſing the abbeſs, "what is your opinion of the late Marquis? The ſtrange circumſtances, that have occurred at the chateau, have ſo much awakened my curioſity, that I ſhall be pardoned the queſtion. What was his imputed crime, and what the puniſhment, to which ſiſter Agnes alluded?"

"We muſt be cautious of advancing our opinion," ſaid the abbeſs, with an air of reſerve, mingled with ſolemnity, "we muſt be cautious of advancing our opinion on ſo delicate a ſubject. I will not take upon me to pronounce, that the late Marquis was criminal, or to ſay what was the crime of which he was ſuſpected; but, concerning the puniſhment our daughter Agnes hinted, I know of none he ſuffered. She probably alluded to the ſevere one, which an exaſperated conſcience can inflict. Beware, my children, of incurring ſo terrible a puniſhment, —it is the purgatory of this life! The late Marchioneſs I knew well; ſhe was a pattern to ſuch as live in the world; nay, our ſacred order need not have bluſhed to copy her virtues! our holy convent received her mortal part; her heavenly ſpirit, I doubt not, aſcended to its ſanctuary!"

As the abbeſs ſpoke this, the laſt bell of veſpers ſtruck up, and ſhe roſe. "Let us go, my children," ſaid ſhe, "and intercede for the wretched; let us go and confeſs our ſins, and endeavour to purify our ſouls for the heaven to which *ſhe* is gone!"

Emily was affected by the ſolemnity of this exhortation, and, remembering her father, "The heaven, to which *he*, too, is gone!" ſaid ſhe, faintly, as ſhe ſuppreſſed her ſighs, and followed the abbeſs and the nuns to the chapel.

CHAP. XLVII.

"Be thou a ſpirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blaſts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,

——I will ſpeak to thee."——

HAMLET.

COUNT DE VILLEFORT, at length, received a letter from the advocate at Avignon, encouraging Emily to aſſert her claim to the eſtates of the late Madame Montoni; and, about the ſame time, a meſſenger arrived from Monſieur Queſnel with intelligence, that made an appeal to the law on this ſubject unneceſſary,

ſince it appeared, that the only perſon, who could have oppoſed her claim, was now no more. A friend of M. Queſnel, who reſided at Venice, had ſent him an account of the death of Montoni, who had been brought to trial with Orſino, as his ſuppoſed accomplice in the murder of the Venetian nobleman. Orſino was found guilty, condemned and executed upon the wheel, but nothing being diſcovered to criminate Montoni, and his colleagues, on this charge, they were all releaſed, except Montoni, who, being conſidered by the ſenate as a very dangerous perſon, was, for other reaſons, ordered again into confinement, where, it was ſaid, he had died in a doubtful and myſterious manner, and not without ſuſpicion of having been poiſoned. The authority, from which M. Queſnel had received this information, would not allow him to doubt its truth, and he told Emily, that ſhe had now only to lay claim to the eſtates of her late aunt, to ſecure them, and added, that he would himſelf aſſiſt in the neceſſary forms of this buſineſs. The term, for which La Vallee had been let being now alſo nearly expired, he acquainted her with the circumſtance, and adviſed her to take the road thither, through Tholouſe, where he promiſed to meet her, and where it would be proper for her to take poſſeſſion of the eſtates of the late Madame Montoni; adding, that he would ſpare her any difficulties, that might occur on that occaſion from the want of knowledge on the ſubject, and that he believed it would be neceſſary for her to be at Tholouſe, in about three weeks from the preſent time.

An increaſe of fortune ſeemed to have awakened this ſudden kindneſs in M. Queſnel towards his niece, and it appeared, that he entertained more reſpect for the rich heireſs, than he had ever felt compaſſion for the poor and unfriended orphan.

The pleaſure with which ſhe received this intelligence, was clouded when ſhe conſidered, that he, for whoſe ſake ſhe had once regretted the want of fortune, was no longer worthy of ſharing it with her; but, remembering the friendly admonition of the Count, ſhe checked this melancholy reflection, and endeavoured to feel only gratitude for the unexpected good, that now attended her; while it formed no inconſiderable part of her ſatisfaction to know, that La Vallee, her native home, which was endeared to her by it's having been the reſidence of her parents, would ſoon be reſtored to her poſſeſſion. There ſhe meant to fix her future reſidence, for, though it could not be compared with the chateau at Tholouſe, either for extent, or magnificence, its pleaſant ſcenes and the tender remembrances, that haunted them, had claims upon her heart, which ſhe was not inclined to ſacri-

fice to oſtentation. She wrote immediately to thank M. Queſnel for the active intereſt he took in her concerns, and to ſay, that ſhe would meet him at Tholouſe at the appointed time.

When Count de Villefort, with Blanche, came to the convent to give Emily the advice of the advocate, he was informed of the contents of M. Queſnel's letter, and gave her his ſincere congratulations, on the occaſion; but ſhe obſerved, that when the firſt expreſſion of ſatisfaction had faded from his countenance, an unuſual gravity ſucceeded, and ſhe ſcarcely heſitated to inquire its cauſe.

"It has no new occaſion," replied the Count; "I am harraſſed and perplexed by the confuſion, into which my family is thrown by their fooliſh ſuperſtition. Idle reports are floating round me, which I can neither admit to be true, or prove to be falſe; and I am, alſo, very anxious about the poor fellow, Ludovico, concerning whom I have not been able to obtain information. Every part of the chateau and every part of the neighbourhood, too, has I believe, been ſearched, and I know not what further can be done, ſince I have already offered large rewards for the diſcovery of him. The keys of the north apartment I have not ſuffered to be out of my poſſeſſion, ſince he diſappeared, and I mean to watch in thoſe chambers, myſelf, this very night."

Emily ſeriouſly alarmed for the Count, united her entreaties with thoſe of the Lady Blanche, to diſſuade him from his purpoſe.

"What ſhould I fear?" ſaid he, "I have no faith in ſupernatural combats, and for human oppoſition I ſhall be prepared; nay, I will even promiſe not to watch alone."

"But who, dear ſir, will have courage enough to watch with you?" ſaid Emily.

"My ſon," replied the Count. "If I am not carried off in the night," added he, ſmiling, "you ſhall hear the reſult of my adventure, to morrow."

The Count and Lady Blanche, ſhortly afterwards, took leave of Emily, and returned to the chateau, where he informed Henri of his intention, who, not without ſome ſecret reluctance, conſented to be the partner of his watch; and, when the deſign was mentioned after ſupper, the Counteſs was terrified, and the Baron, and M. Du Pont joined with her in entreating, that he would not tempt his fate, as Ludovico had done. "We know not," added the Baron, "the nature, or the power of an evil ſpirit; and that ſuch a ſpirit haunts thoſe chambers can now, I think, ſcarcely be doubted. Beware, my lord, how you provoke its vengeance, ſince it has already given us one terrible example

of its malice. I allow it may be probable, that the ſpirits of the dead are permitted to return to the earth only on occaſions of high import; but the preſent import may be your deſtruction."

The Count could not forbear ſmiling; "Do you think then, Baron," ſaid he, "that my deſtruction is of ſufficient importance to draw back to earth the ſoul of the departed? Alas! my good friend, there is no occaſion for ſuch means to accompliſh the deſtruction of any individual. Wherever the myſtery reſts, I truſt I ſhall, this night, be able to detect it. You know I am not ſuperſtitious."

"I know that you are incredulous," interrupted the Baron.

"Well, call it what you will, I meant to ſay, that, though you know I am free from ſuperſtition—if any thing ſupernatural has appeared, I doubt not it will appear to me, and if any ſtrange event hangs over my houſe, or if any extraordinary tranſaction has formerly been connected with it, I ſhall probably be made acquainted with it. At all events I will invite diſcovery; and, that I may be equal to a mortal attack, which in good truth, my friend, is what I moſt expect, I ſhall take care to be well armed."

The Count took leave of his family, for the night, with an aſſumed gaiety, which but ill concealed the anxiety, that depreſſed his ſpirits, and retired to the north apartments, accompanied by his ſon and followed by the Baron, M. Du Pont and ſome of the domeſtics, who all bade him good night at the outer door. In theſe chambers every thing appeared as when he had laſt been here; even in the bed room no alteration was viſible, where he lighted his own fire, for none of the domeſtics could be prevailed upon to venture thither. After carefully examining the chamber and the oriel, the Count and Henri drew their chairs upon the hearth, ſet a bottle of wine and a lamp before them, laid their ſwords upon the table, and, ſtirring the wood into a blaze, began to converſe on indifferent topics. But Henri was often ſilent and abſtracted, and ſometimes threw a glance of mingled awe and curioſity round the gloomy apartment; while the Count gradually ceaſed to converſe, and ſat either loſt in thought, or reading a volume of Tacitus, which he had brought to beguile the tediouſneſs of the night.

CHAP. XLVIII.

"Give thy thoughts no tongue."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Baron St. Foix, whom anxiety for his friend had kept awake, roſe early to inquire the event of the night, when, as he paſſed the Count's cloſet, hearing ſteps within, he knocked at the door, and it was opened by his friend himſelf. Rejoicing to ſee him in ſafety, and curious to learn the occurrences of the night, he had not immediately leiſure to obſerve the unuſual gravity, that overſpread the features of the Count, whoſe reſerved anſwers firſt occaſioned him to notice it. The Count, then ſmiling, endeavoured to treat the ſubject of his curioſity with levity; but the Baron was ſerious, and purſued his inquiries ſo cloſely, that the Count, at length, reſuming his gravity, ſaid, "Well, my friend, preſs the ſubject no further, I entreat you; and let me requeſt alſo, that you will hereafter be ſilent upon any thing you may think extraordinary in my future conduct. I do not ſcruple to tell you, that I am unhappy, and that the watch of the laſt night has not aſſiſted me to diſcover Ludovico; upon every occurrence of the night you muſt excuſe my reſerve."

"But where is Henri?" ſaid the Baron, with ſurpriſe and diſappointment at this denial.

"He is well in his own apartment," replied the Count. "You will not queſtion him on this topic, my friend, ſince you know my wiſh."

"Certainly not," ſaid the Baron ſomewhat chagrined, "ſince it would be diſpleaſing to you; but methinks, my friend, you might rely on my diſcretion, and drop this unuſual reſerve. However, you muſt allow me to ſuſpect, that you have ſeen reaſon to become a convert to my ſyſtem, and are no longer the incredulous knight you lately appeared to be."

"Let us talk no more upon this ſubject," ſaid the Count; "you may be aſſured, that no ordinary circumſtance has impoſed this ſilence upon me towards a friend, whom I have called ſo for near thirty years; and my preſent reſerve cannot make you queſtion either my eſteem, or the ſincerity of my friendſhip."

"I will not doubt either," ſaid the Baron, "though you muſt allow me to expreſs my ſurpriſe, at this ſilence."

"To me I will allow it," replied the Count, "but I earneſtly entreat that you will forbear to notice it to my family, as well as every thing remarkable you may obſerve in my conduct towards them."

The Baron readily promiſed this, and, after converſing for ſometime on general topics, they deſcended to the breakfaſt room, where the Count met his family with a cheerful countenance, and evaded their inquiries by employing light ridicule, and aſſuming an air of uncommon gaiety, while he aſſured them, that they need not apprehend any evil from the north chambers, ſince Henri and himſelf had been permitted to return from them in ſafety.

Henri, however, was leſs ſucceſsful in diſguiſing his feelings. From his countenance an expreſſion of terror was not entirely faded; he was often ſilent and thoughtful, and, when he attempted to laugh at the eager inquiries of Mademoiſelle Bearn, it was evidently only an attempt.

In the evening, the Count called, as he had promiſed, at the convent, and Emily was ſurpriſed to perceive a mixture of playful ridicule and of reſerve in his mention of the north apartment. Of what had occurred there, however, he ſaid nothing, and, when ſhe ventured to remind him of his promiſe to tell her the reſult of his inquiries, and to aſk if he had received any proof, that thoſe chambers were haunted, his look became ſolemn, for a moment, then, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he ſmiled, and ſaid, "My dear Emily, do not ſuffer my lady abbeſs to infect your good underſtanding with theſe fancies; ſhe will teach you to expect a ghoſt in every dark room. But believe me," added he, with a profound ſigh, "the apparition of the dead comes not on light or ſportive errands, to terrify, or to ſurpriſe the timid." He pauſed, and fell into a momentary thoughtfulneſs, and then added, "We will ſay no more on this ſubject."

Soon after, he took leave, and, when Emily joined ſome of the nuns, ſhe was ſurpriſed to find them acquainted with a circumſtance which ſhe had carefully avoided to mention, and expreſſing their admiration of his intrepidity in having dared to paſs a night in the apartment, whence Ludovico had diſappeared; for ſhe had not conſidered with what rapidity a tale of wonder circulates. The nuns had acquired their information from peaſants, who brought fruit to the monaſtery, and whoſe whole attention had been fixed, ſince the diſappearance of Ludovico, on what was paſſing in the caſtle.

Emily liſtened in ſilence to the various opinions of the nuns, concerning the conduct of the Count, moſt of whom condemned it as raſh and preſumptuous, affirming, that it was provoking the vengeance of an evil ſpirit, thus to intrude upon its haunts.

Siſter Frances contended, that the Count had acted with the bravery of a virtuous mind. He knew himſelf guiltleſs of

aught, that ſhould provoke a good ſpirit, and did not fear the ſpells of an evil one, ſince he could claim the protection of an higher Power, of Him, who can command the wicked and will protect the innocent.

"The guilty cannot claim that protection!" ſaid ſiſter Agnes, "let the Count look to his conduct, that he do not forfeit his claim! Yet who is he, that ſhall dare to call himſelf innocent! —all earthly innocence is but comparative. Yet ſtill how wide aſunder are the extremes of guilt, and to what an horrible depth may we fall! Oh!"———

The nun, as ſhe concluded, uttered a ſhuddering ſigh, that ſtartled Emily, who, looking up, perceived the eyes of Agnes fixed on hers, after which the ſiſter roſe, took her hand, gazed earneſtly upon her countenance, for ſome moments, in ſilence, and then ſaid,

"You are young—you are innocent! I mean you are yet innocent of any great crime!—But you have paſſions in your heart, —ſcorpions; they ſleep now—beware how you awaken them! —they will ſting you, even unto death!"

Emily, affected by theſe words and by the ſolemnity, with which they were delivered, could not ſuppreſs her tears.

"Ah! is it ſo?" exclaimed Agnes, her countenance ſoftening from its ſternneſs—"ſo young, and ſo unfortunate! We are ſiſters, then indeed. Yet, there is no bond of kindneſs among the guilty," ſhe added, while her eyes reſumed their wild expreſſion, "no gentleneſs,—no peace, no hope! I knew them all once—my eyes could weep—but now they burn, for now, my ſoul is fixed and fearleſs!—I lament no more!"

"Rather let us repent, and pray," ſaid another nun. "We are taught to hope, that prayer and penitence will work our ſalvation. There is hope for all who repent!"

"Who repent and turn to the true faith," obſerved ſiſter Frances.

"For all but me!" replied Agnes ſolemnly, who pauſed, and then abruptly added, "My head burns, I believe I am not well. O! could I ſtrike from my memory all former ſcenes—the figures that riſe up like furies, to torment me!—I ſee them when I ſleep, and, when I am awake, they are ſtill before my eyes! I ſee them now—now!

She ſtood in a fixed attitude of horror, her ſtraining eyes moving ſlowly round the room, as if they followed ſomething. One of the nuns gently took her hand, to lead her from the parlour. Agnes became calm, drew her other hand acroſs her eyes, look-

ed again, and, ſighing deeply, ſaid, "They are gone—they are gone! I am feveriſh, I know not what I ſay. I am thus, ſometimes, but it will go off again, I ſhall ſoon be better. Was not that the veſper bell?"

"No," replied Frances, "the evening ſervice is paſſed. Let Margaret lead you to your cell."

"You are right," replied ſiſter Agnes, "I ſhall be better there. Good night, my ſiſters, remember me in your oriſons!"

When they had withdrawn, Frances, obſerving Emily's emotion, ſaid, "Do not be alarmed, our ſiſter is often thus deranged though I have not lately ſeen her ſo frantic; her uſual mood is melancholy. This fit has been coming on, for ſeveral days; ſecluſion and the cuſtomary treatment will reſtore her."

"But how rationally ſhe converſed, at firſt!" obſerved Emily," "her ideas followed each other in perfect order."

"Yes," replied the nun, "this is nothing new; nay, I have ſometimes known her argue not only with method, but with acuteneſs, and then, in a moment, ſtart off into madneſs."

"Her conſcience ſeems afflicted," ſaid Emily, "did you ever hear what circumſtance reduced her to this deplorable condition?"

"I have," replied the nun, who ſaid no more till Emily repeated the queſtion, when ſhe added in a low voice, and looking ſignificantly towards the other boarders, "I cannot tell you now, but, if you think it worth your while, come to my cell, to night, when our ſiſterhood are at reſt, and you ſhall hear more; but remember we riſe to midnight prayers, and come either before or after midnight."

Emily promiſed to remember, and the abbeſs ſoon after appearing, they ſpoke no more of the unhappy nun.

The Count, meanwhile, on his return home, had found M. Du Pont in one of thoſe fits of deſpondency, which his attachment to Emily frequently occaſioned him, an attachment, that had ſubſiſted too long to be eaſily ſubdued, and which had already outlived the oppoſition of his friends. M. Du Pont had firſt ſeen Emily in Gaſcony, during the lifetime of his parent, who, on diſcovering his ſon's partiality for Mademoiſelle St. Aubert, his inferior in point of fortune, forbade him to declare it to her family, or to think of her more. During the life of his father, he had obſerved the firſt command, but had found it impracticable to obey the ſecond, and had, ſometimes ſoothed his paſſion by viſiting her favourite haunts, among which was the fiſhing houſe, where once or twice, he addreſſed her in verſe, concealing

his name, in obedience to the promiſe he had given his father. There too he played the pathetic air, to which ſhe had liſtened with ſuch ſurpriſe and admiration; and there he found the miniature that had ſince cheriſhed a paſſion fatal to his repoſe. During his expedition into Italy, his father died; but he received his liberty at a moment, when he was the leaſt enabled to profit by it, ſince the object that rendered it moſt valuable, was no longer within the reach of his vows. By what accident he diſcovered Emily, and aſſiſted to releaſe her from a terrible impriſonment, has already appeared, and alſo the unavailing hope, with which he then encouraged his love, and the fruitleſs efforts, that he had ſince made to overcome it.

The Count ſtill endeavoured, with friendly zeal, to ſooth him with a belief, that patience, perſeverance and prudence, would finally obtain for him happineſs and Emily; "Time," ſaid he, "will wear away the melancholy impreſſion, which diſappointment has left on her mind, and ſhe will be ſenſible of your merit. Your ſervices have already awakened her gratitude, and your ſufferings her pity; and truſt me, my friend, in a heart ſo ſenſible as hers, gratitude and pity lead to love. When her imagination is reſcued from its preſent deluſion, ſhe will readily accept the homage of a mind like yours."

Du Pont ſighed, while he liſtened to theſe words; and, endeavouring to hope what his friend believed, he willingly yielded to an invitation to prolong his viſit at the chateau, which we now leave for the monaſtery of St. Claire.

When the nuns had retired to reſt, Emily ſtole to her appointment with ſiſter Frances, whom ſhe found in her cell, engaged in prayer, before a little table, where appeared the image ſhe was addreſſing, and above, the dim lamp, that gave light to the place. Turning her eyes, as the door opened, ſhe beckoned to Emily to come in, who having done ſo, ſeated herſelf in ſilence beſide the nun's little mattreſs of ſtraw, till her oriſons ſhould conclude. The latter ſoon roſe from her knees, and, taking down the lamp and placing it on the table, Emily perceived there a human ſcull and bones, lying beſide an hour glaſs; but the nun, without obſerving her emotion, ſat down on the mattreſs by her, ſaying, "Your curioſity, ſiſter, has made you punctual, but you have nothing remarkable to hear in the hiſtory of poor Agnes, of whom I avoided to ſpeak in the preſence of my lay ſiſters, only becauſe I would not publiſh her crime to them."

"I ſhall conſider your confidence in me as a favour," ſaid Emily, "and will not miſuſe it."

"Sister Agnes," resumed the nun, "is of a noble family, as the dignity of her air must already have informed you, but I will not dishonour their name so much as to reveal it. Love was the occasion of her crime and of her madness. She was beloved by a gentleman of inferior fortune, and her father, as I have heard, bestowing her on a nobleman, whom she disliked, an ill governed passion proved her destruction.—Every obligation of virtue and of duty was forgotten, and she prophaned her marriage vows; but her guilt was soon detected, and she would have fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance of her husband, had not her father contrived to convey her from his power. By what means he did this, I never could learn; but he secreted her in this convent, where he afterwards prevailed with her to take the veil, while a report was circulated in the world, that she was dead, and the father, to save his daughter, assisted the rumour, and employed such means as induced her husband to believe she had become a victim to his jealousy. You look surprised," added the nun, observing Emily's countenance; "I allow the story is uncommon, but not, I believe, without a parallel."

"Pray proceed," said Emily, "I am interested."

"The story is already told," resumed the nun, "I have only to mention, that the long struggle, which Agnes suffered, between love, remorse and a sense of the duties she had taken upon herself in becoming of our order, at length unsettled her reason. At first, she was frantic and melancholy by quick alternatives; then she sunk into a deep and settled melancholy, which still, however, has at times, been interrupted by fits of wildness, and, of late, these have again been frequent."

Emily was affected by the history of the sister, some parts of whose story brought to her remembrance that of the Marchioness de Villeroi, who had also been compelled by her father to forsake the object of her affections, for a nobleman of his choice, but, from what Dorothee had related, there appeared no reason to suppose, that she had escaped the vengeance of a jealous husband, or to doubt for a moment the innocence of her conduct. But Emily, while she sighed over the misery of the nun, could not forbear shedding a few tears to the misfortunes of the Marchioness; and when she returned to the mention of sister Agnes, she asked Frances if she remembered her in her youth, and whether she was then beautiful.

"I was not here at the time, when she took the vows," replied Frances, "which is so long ago, that few of the present sisterhood, I believe, were witnesses of the ceremony; nay, even our lady

mother did not then preſide over the convent: but I can remember, when ſiſter Agnes was a very beautiful woman. She retains that air of high rank, which always diſtinguiſhed her, but her beauty, you muſt perceive, is fled; I can ſcarcely diſcover even a veſtige of the lovelineſs, that once animated her features."

"It is ſtrange," ſaid Emily, "but there are moments, when her countenance has appeared familiar to my memory! You will think me fanciful, and I think myſelf ſo, for I certainly never ſaw ſiſter Agnes, before I came to this convent, and I muſt, therefore, have ſeen ſome perſon, whom ſhe ſtrongly reſembles, though of this I have no recollection."

"You have been intereſted by the deep melancholy of her countenance," ſaid Frances, "and its impreſſion has probably deluded your imagination; for I might as reaſonably think I perceived a likeneſs between you and Agnes, as you, that you have ſeen her any where but in this convent, ſince this has been her place of refuge, for nearly as many years as make your age."

"Indeed!" ſaid Emily.

"Yes," rejoined Frances, "and why does that circumſtance excite your ſurpriſe?"

Emily did not appear to notice this queſtion, but remained thoughtful, for a few moments, and then ſaid, "It was about that ſame period that the Marchioneſs de Villeroi expired."

"That is an odd remark," ſaid Frances.

Emily, recalled from her reverie, ſmiled, and gave the converſation another turn, but it ſoon came back to the ſubject of the unhappy nun, and Emily remained in the cell of ſiſter Frances, till the midnight bell arouſed her; when apologizing for having interrupted the ſiſter's repoſe, till this late hour, they quitted the cell together. Emily returned to her chamber, and the nun, bearing a glimmering taper, went to her devotion in the chapel.

Several days followed, during which Emily ſaw neither the Count, or any of his family; and, when, at length, he appeared, ſhe remarked, with concern, that his air was unuſually diſturbed.

"My ſpirits are harraſſed," ſaid he, in anſwer to her anxious inquiries, "and I mean to change my reſidence for a little while, an experiment, which, I hope, will reſtore my mind to its uſual tranquillity. My daughter and myſelf will accompany the Baron St. Foix to his chateau. It lies in a valley of the Pyrenees, that opens towards Gaſcony, and I have been thinking, Emily, that when you ſet out for La Vallee, we may go part of the way together; it would be a ſatisfaction to me to guard you towards your home."

She thanked the Count for his friendly conſideration, and lamented, that the neceſſity for her going firſt to Tholouſe would render this plan impracticable, "But, when you are at the Baron's reſidence," ſhe added, "you will be only a ſhort journey from La Vallee, and I think, ſir, you will not leave the country without viſiting me; it is unneceſſary to ſay with what pleaſure I ſhould receive you and the Lady Blanche."

"I do not doubt it," replied the Count, "and I will not deny myſelf and Blanche the pleaſure of viſiting you, if your affairs ſhould allow you to be at La Vallee, about the time when we can meet you there."

When Emily ſaid that ſhe ſhould hope to ſee the Counteſs alſo, ſhe was not ſorry to learn that this lady was going, accompanied by Mademoiſelle Bearn, to pay a viſit, for a few weeks, to a family in lower Languedoc.

The Count, after ſome further converſation on his intended journey and on the arrangement of Emily's, took leave; and many days did not ſucceed this viſit, before a ſecond letter from M. Queſnel informed her, that he was then at Tholouſe, that La Valle was at liberty, and that he wiſhed her to ſet off for the former place, where he awaited her arrival, with all poſſible diſpatch, ſince his own affairs preſſed him to return to Gaſcony. Emily did not heſitate to obey him, and, having taken an affecting leave of the Count's family, in which M. Du Pont was ſtill included, and of her friends at the convent, ſhe ſet out for Tholouſe, attended by the unhappy Annette, and guarded by a ſteady ſervant of the Count.

CHAP. XLIX.

"Lull'd in the countleſs chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain:
Awake but one, and lo! what myriads riſe!
Each ſtamps its image as the other flies!"

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

EMILY purſued her journey, without any accident, along the plains of Languedoc towards the north weſt; and, on this her return to Tholouſe, which ſhe had laſt left with Madame Montoni, ſhe thought much on the melancholy fate of her aunt, who, but for her own imprudence, might now have been living in happineſs there! Montoni, too, often roſe to her fancy, ſuch

as ſhe had ſeen him in his days of triumph, bold, ſpirited and commanding; ſuch alſo as ſhe had ſince beheld him in his days of vengeance; and now, only a few ſhort months had paſſed—and he had no longer the power, or the will to afflict;—he had become a clod of earth, and his life was vaniſhed like a ſhadow! Emily could have wept at his fate, had ſhe not remembered his crimes; for that of her unfortunate aunt ſhe did weep, and all ſenſe of her errors was overcome by the recollection of her miſfortunes.

Other thoughts and other emotions ſucceeded, as Emily drew near the well known ſcenes of her early love, and conſidered, that Valancourt was loſt to her and to himſelf, for ever. At length, ſhe came to the brow of the hill, whence, on her departure for Italy, ſhe had given a farewel look to this beloved landſcape, amongſt whoſe woods and fields ſhe had ſo often walked with Valancourt, and where he was then to inhabit, when ſhe would be far, far away! She ſaw, once more, that chain of the Pyrenees, which overlooked La Vallée, riſing, like faint clouds, on the horizon. "There, too, is Gaſcony, extended at their feet!" ſaid ſhe, "O my father,—my mother! And there, too, is the Garonne!" ſhe added, drying the tears, that obſcured her ſight, "and Tholouſe, and my aunt's manſion, and the groves in her garden!—O my friends! are ye all loſt to me—muſt I never, never ſee ye more!" Tears ruſhed again to her eyes, and ſhe continued to weep, till an abrupt turn in the road had nearly occaſioned the carriage to overſet, when, looking up, ſhe perceived another part of the well known ſcene around Tholouſe, and all the reflections and anticipations, which ſhe had ſuffered, at the moment, when ſhe bade it laſt adieu, came with recollected force to her heart. She remembered how anxiouſly ſhe had looked forward to the futurity, which was to decide her happineſs concerning Valancourt, and what depreſſing fears had aſſailed her; the very words ſhe had uttered, as ſhe withdrew her laſt look from the proſpect, came to her memory. "Could I but be certain," ſhe had then ſaid, "that I ſhould ever return, and that Valancourt would ſtill live for me—I ſhould go in peace!"

Now, that futurity, ſo anxiouſly anticipated, was arrived, ſhe was returned—but what a dreary blank appeared!—Valancourt no longer lived for her! She had no longer even the melancholy ſatisfaction of contemplating his image in her heart, for he was no longer the ſame Valancourt ſhe had cheriſhed there—the ſolace of many a mournful hour, the animating friend, that had enabled her to bear up againſt the oppreſſion of Montoni—the diſ-

tant hope, that had beamed over her gloomy proſpect! On perceiving this beloved idea to be an illuſion of her own creation, Valancourt ſeemed to be annihilated, and her ſoul ſickened at the blank, that remained. His marriage with a rival, even his death, ſhe thought ſhe could have endured with more fortitude, than this diſcovery; for then, amidſt all her grief, ſhe could have looked in ſecret upon the image of goodneſs, which her fancy had drawn of him, and comfort would have mingled with her ſuffering!

Drying her tears, ſhe looked once more upon the landſcape, which had excited them, and perceived, that ſhe was paſſing the very bank where ſhe had taken leave of Valancourt, on the morning of her departure from Tholouſe, and ſhe now ſaw him, through her returning tears, ſuch as he had appeared, when ſhe looked from the carriage to give him a laſt adieu—ſaw him leaning mournfully againſt the high trees, and remembered the fixed look of mingled tenderneſs and anguiſh, with which he had then regarded her. This recollection was too much for her heart, and ſhe ſunk back in the carriage, nor once looked up, till it ſtopped at the gates of what was now her own manſion.

Theſe being opened, and by the ſervant, to whoſe care the chateau had been entruſted, the carriage drove into the court, where, alighting, ſhe haſtily paſſed through the great hall, now ſilent and ſolitary, to a large oak parlour, the common ſitting room of the late Madame Montoni, where, inſtead of being received by M. Queſnel, ſhe found a letter from him, informing her, that buſineſs of conſequence had obliged him to leave Tholouſe two days before. Emily was, upon the whole, not ſorry to be ſpared his preſence, ſince his abrupt departure appeared to indicate the ſame indifference, with which he had formerly regarded her. This letter informed her, alſo, of the progreſs he had made in the ſettlement of her affairs, and concluded with directions, concerning the forms of ſome buſineſs, which remained for her to tranſact. But M. Queſnel's unkindneſs did not long occupy her thoughts, which returned to the remembrance of the perſons ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſee in this manſion, and chiefly of the ill guided and unfortunate Madame Montoni. In the room, where ſhe now ſat, ſhe had breakfaſted with her on the morning of their departure for Italy; and the view of it brought moſt forcibly to her recollection all ſhe had herſelf ſuffered, at that time, and the many gay expectations, which her aunt had formed, reſpecting the journey before her. While Emily's mind was thus engaged, her eyes wandered unconſciouſly to a large

window, that looked upon the garden, and here new memorials of the paſt ſpoke to her heart, for ſhe ſaw extended before her, the very avenue, in which ſhe had parted with Valancourt, on the eve of her journey; and all the anxiety, the tender intereſt he had ſhewn, concerning her future happineſs, his earneſt remonſtrances againſt her committing herſelf to the power of Montoni, and the truth of his affection, came afreſh to her memory. At this moment, it appeared almoſt impoſſible, that Valancourt could have become unworthy of her regard, and ſhe doubted all that ſhe had lately heard to his diſadvantage, and even his own words, which had confirmed Count De Villefort's report of him. Overcome by the recollections, which the view of this avenue occaſioned, ſhe turned abruptly from the window, and ſunk into a chair beſide it, where ſhe ſat, given up to grief, till the entrance of Annette, with coffee, arouſed her.

"Dear madam, how melancholy this place looks now," ſaid Annette, "to what it uſed to do! It is diſmal coming home, when there is nobody to welcome one!"

This was not the moment, in which Emily could bear the remark; her tears fell again, and as ſoon as ſhe had taken the coffee, ſhe retired to her apartment, where ſhe endeavoured to repoſe her fatigued ſpirits. But buſy memory would ſtill ſupply her with the viſions of former times: ſhe ſaw Valancourt intereſting and benevolent, as he had been wont to appear in the days of their early love, and, amidſt the ſcenes, where ſhe had believed that they ſhould ſometimes paſs their years together!—but, at length, ſleep cloſed theſe afflicting ſcenes from her view.

On the following morning, ſerious occupation recovered her from ſuch melancholy reflections; for, being deſirous of quitting Tholouſe, and of haſtening on to La Vallee, ſhe made ſome inquiries into the condition of the eſtate, and immediately diſpatched a part of the neceſſary buſineſs concerning it, according to the directions of Monſ. Queſnel. It required a ſtrong effort to abſtract her thoughts from other intereſts ſufficiently to attend to this, but ſhe was rewarded for her exertions by again experiencing, that employment is the ſureſt antidote to ſorrow.

This day was devoted entirely to buſineſs; and, among other concerns, ſhe employed means to learn the ſituation of all her poor tenants, that ſhe might relieve their wants, or confirm their comforts.

In the evening, her ſpirits were ſo much ſtrengthened, that ſhe thought ſhe could bear to viſit the gardens, where ſhe had ſo often walked with Valancourt; and, knowing, that, if ſhe de-

layed to do ſo, their ſcenes would only affect her the more, whenever they ſhould be viewed, ſhe took advantage of the preſent ſtate of her mind, and entered them.

Paſſing haſtily the gate leading from the court into the gardens, ſhe hurried up the great avenue, ſcarcely permitting her memory to dwell for a moment on the circumſtance of her having here parted with Valancourt, and ſoon quitted this for other walks leſs intereſting to her heart. Theſe brought her, at length, to the flight of ſteps, that led from the lower garden to the terrace, on ſeeing which, ſhe became agitated, and heſitated whether to aſcend, but, her reſolution returning, ſhe proceeded.

"Ah!" ſaid Emily, as ſhe aſcended, "theſe are the ſame high trees, that uſed to wave over the terrace, and theſe the ſame flowery thickets—the libernum, the wild roſe, and the cerinthe, which were wont to grow beneath them! Ah! and there, too, on that bank, are the very plants, which Valancourt ſo carefully reared!—O when laſt I ſaw them!"—She checked the thought, but could not reſtrain her tears, and, after walking ſlowly on for a few moments, her agitation, upon the view of this well known ſcene, increaſed ſo much, that ſhe was obliged to ſtop, and lean upon the wall of the terrace. It was a mild, and beautiful evening. The ſun was ſetting over the extenſive landſcape, to which his beams, ſloping from beneath a dark cloud, that overhung the weſt, gave rich and partial colouring, and touched the tufted ſummits of the groves, that roſe from the garden below, with a yellow gleam. Emily and Valancourt had often admired together this ſcene, at the ſame hour; and it was exactly on this ſpot, that, on the night preceding her departure for Italy, ſhe had liſtened to his remonſtrances againſt the journey, and to the pleadings of paſſionate affection. Some obſervations, which ſhe made on the landſcape, brought this to her remembrance, and with it all the minute particulars of that converſation: the alarming doubts he had expreſſed concerning Montoni, doubts, which had ſince been fatally confirmed; the reaſons and entreaties he had employed to prevail with her to conſent to an immediate marriage; the tenderneſs of his love, the paroxyſms of his grief, and the conviction he had repeatedly expreſſed, that they ſhould never meet again in happineſs! All theſe circumſtances roſe afreſh to her mind, and awakened the various emotions ſhe had then ſuffered. Her tenderneſs for Valancourt became as powerful as in the moments, when ſhe thought, that ſhe was parting with him and happineſs together, and when the ſtrength of her mind had enabled her to triumph over preſent ſuffering, rather

than to deſerve the reproach of her conſcience by engaging in a clandeſtine marriage. "Alas!" ſaid Emily, as theſe recollections came to her mind, "and what have I gained by the fortitude I then practiſed?—am I happy now?—He ſaid, we ſhould meet no more in happineſs; but, O! he little thought his own miſconduct would ſeparate us, and lead to the very evil he then dreaded!"

Her reflections increaſed her anguiſh, while ſhe was compelled to acknowledge, that the fortitude ſhe had formerly exerted, if it had not conducted her to happineſs, had ſaved her from irretrievable misfortune—from Valancourt himſelf! But in theſe moments ſhe could not congratulate herſelf on the prudence, that had ſaved her; ſhe could only lament, with bittereſt anguiſh, the circumſtances, which had conſpired to betray Valancourt into a courſe of life ſo different from that, which the virtues, the taſte, and the purſuits of his early years had promiſed; but ſhe ſtill loved him too well to believe, that his heart was even now depraved, though his conduct had been criminal. An obſervation, which had fallen from M. St. Aubert more than once, now occurred to her. "This young man," ſaid he, ſpeaking of Valancourt, "has never been at Paris;" a remark, that had ſurpriſed her at the time it was uttered, but which ſhe now underſtood, and ſhe exclaimed ſorrowfully, "O Valancourt! if ſuch a friend as my father had been with you at Paris—your noble, ingenuous nature would not have fallen!"

The ſun was now ſet, and, recalling her thoughts from their melancholy ſubject, ſhe continued her walk; for the penſive ſhade of twilight was pleaſing to her, and the nightingales from the ſurrounding groves began to anſwer each other in the long drawn, plaintive note, which always touched her heart; while all the fragrance of the flowery thickets, that bounded the terrace, was awakened by the cool evening air, which floated ſo lightly among their leaves, that they ſcarcely trembled as it paſſed.

Emily came, at length, to the ſteps of the pavilion, that terminated the terrace, and where her laſt interview with Valancourt, before her departure from Tholouſe, had ſo unexpectedly taken place. The door was now ſhut, and ſhe trembled, while ſhe heſitated whether to open it; but her wiſh to ſee again a place, which had been the chief ſcene of her former happineſs, at length overcoming her reluctance to encounter the painful regret it would renew, ſhe entered. The room was obſcured by a melancholy ſhade; but through the open lattices, darkened by the hanging foliage of the vines, appeared the duſky landſcape, the

Garonne reflecting the evening light, and the weſt ſtill glowing. A chair was placed near one of the balconies, as if ſome perſon had been ſitting there, but the other furniture of the pavilion remained exactly as uſual, and Emily thought it looked as if it had not once been moved ſince ſhe ſet out for Italy. The ſilent and deſerted air of the place added ſolemnity to her emotions, for ſhe heard only the low whiſper of the breeze, as it ſhook the leaves of the vines, and the very faint murmur of the Garonne.

She ſeated herſelf in a chair, near the lattice, and yielded to the ſadneſs of her heart, while ſhe recollected the circumſtances of her parting interview with Valancourt, on this ſpot. It was here too, that ſhe had paſſed ſome of the happieſt hours of her life with him, when her aunt favoured the connection, for here ſhe had often ſat and worked, while he converſed, or read; and ſhe now well remembered with what diſcriminating judgment, with what tempered energy, he uſed to repeat ſome of the ſublimeſt paſſages of their favourite authors; how often he would pauſe to admire with her their excellence, and with what tender delight he would liſten to her remarks, and correct her taſte.

"And is it poſſible," ſaid Emily, as theſe recollections returned, "is it poſſible, that a mind ſo ſuſceptible of whatever is grand and beautiful, could ſtoop to low purſuits, and be ſubdued by frivolous temptations?"

She remembered how often ſhe had ſeen the ſudden tear ſtart in his eye, and had heard his voice tremble with emotion, while he related any great or benevolent action, or repeated a ſentiment of the ſame character. "And ſuch a mind," ſaid ſhe, "ſuch a heart, were to be ſacrificed to the habits of a great city!"

Theſe recollections becoming too painful to be endured, ſhe abruptly left the pavilion, and, anxious to eſcape from the memorials of her departed happineſs, returned towards the chateau. As ſhe paſſed along the terrace, ſhe perceived a perſon, walking with a ſlow ſtep, and a dejected air, under the trees, at ſome diſtance. The twilight, which was now deep, would not allow her to diſtinguiſh who it was, and ſhe imagined it to be one of the ſervants, till, the ſound of her ſteps ſeeming to reach him, he turned half round, and ſhe thought ſhe ſaw Valancourt!

Whoever it was, he inſtantly ſtruck among the thickets on the left, and diſappeared, while Emily, her eyes fixed on the place whence he had vaniſhed, and her frame trembling ſo exceſſively, that ſhe could ſcarcely ſupport herſelf, remained, for ſome moments, unable to quit the ſpot, and ſcarcely conſcious of exiſtence,

With her recollection, her ſtrength returned, and ſhe hurried toward the houſe, where ſhe did not venture to inquire who had been in the gardens, leſt ſhe ſhould betray her emotion; and ſhe ſat down alone, endeavouring, to recollect the figure, air and features of the perſon ſhe had juſt ſeen. Her view of him, however, had been ſo tranſient, and the gloom had rendered it ſo imperfect, that ſhe could remember nothing with exactneſs; yet the general appearance of his figure, and his abrupt departure, made her ſtill believe that this perſon was Valancourt. Sometimes, indeed, ſhe thought, that her fancy, which had been occupied by the idea of him, had ſuggeſted his image to her uncertain ſight: but this conjecture was fleeting. If it was himſelf, whom ſhe had ſeen, ſhe wondered much, that he ſhould be at Tholouſe, and more, how he had gained admittance into the garden; but as often as her impatience prompted her to inquire whether any ſtranger had been admitted, ſhe was reſtrained by an unwillingneſs to betray her doubts, and the evening was paſſed in anxious conjecture, and in efforts to diſmiſs the ſubject from her thoughts. But theſe endeavours were ineffectual, and a thouſand inconſiſtent emotions aſſailed her, whenever ſhe fancied that Valancourt might be near her; now ſhe dreaded it to be true, and now ſhe feared it to be falſe; and, while ſhe conſtantly tried to perſuade herſelf, that ſhe wiſhed the perſon, whom ſhe had ſeen, might not be Valancourt, her heart as conſtantly contradicted her reaſon.

The following day was occupied by the viſits of ſeveral neighbouring families, formerly intimate with Madame Montoni, who came to condole with Emily on her death, to congratulate her upon the acquiſition of theſe eſtates, and to inquire about Montoni, and concerning the ſtrange reports they had heard of her own ſituation; all which was done with the utmoſt decorum, and the viſitors departed with as much compoſure as they had arrived.

Emily was wearied by theſe formalities, and diſguſted by the ſubſervient manners of many perſons, who had thought her ſcarcely worthy of common attention, while ſhe was believed to be a dependant of Madame Montoni.

"Surely," ſaid ſhe, "there is ſome magic in wealth, which can thus make perſons pay their court to it, when it does not even benefit themſelves. How ſtrange it is that a fool or a knave, with riches, ſhould be treated with more reſpect by the world, than a good man, or a wiſe man in poverty!"

It was evening, before ſhe was left alone, and ſhe then wiſhed to have refreſhed her ſpirits, in the free air of her garden; but

ſhe feared to go thither, leſt ſhe ſhould meet again the perſon, whom ſhe had ſeen on the preceding night, and he ſhould prove to be Valancourt. The ſuſpenſe and anxiety ſhe ſuffered, on this ſubject, ſhe found all her efforts unable to controul, and her ſecret wiſh to ſee Valancourt once more, though unſeen by him, powerfully prompted her to go, but prudence and a delicate pride reſtrained her, and ſhe determined to avoid the poſſibility of throwing herſelf in his way, by forbearing to viſit the gardens, for ſeveral days.

When, after near a week, ſhe again ventured thither, ſhe made Annette her companion, and confined her walk to the lower grounds, but often ſtarted as the leaves ruſtled in the breeze, imagining, that ſome perſon was among the thickets; and, at the turn of every alley, ſhe looked forward with apprehenſive expectation. She purſued her walk thoughtfully and ſilently, for her agitation would not ſuffer her to converſe with Annette, to whom, however, thought and ſilence were ſo intolerable, that ſhe did not ſcruple at length to talk to her miſtreſs.

"Dear madam," ſaid ſhe, "why do you ſtart ſo? one would think you knew what has happened."

"What has happened?" ſaid Emily in a faltering voice, and trying to command her emotion.

"The night before laſt, you know, madam"——

"I know nothing, Annette," replied her lady in a more hurried voice.

"The night before laſt, madam, there was a robber in the garden."

"A robber," ſaid Emily, in an eager, yet doubting tone.

"I ſuppoſe he was a robber, madam. What elſe could he be?"

"Where did you ſee him, Annette?" rejoined Emily, looking round her, and turning back towards the chateau.

"It was not I that ſaw him, madam, it was Jean the gardener. It was twelve o'clock at night, and as he was coming acroſs the court to go the back way into the houſe, what ſhould he ſee —but ſomebody walking in the avenue, that fronts the garden gate! So, with that, Jean gueſſed how it was, and he went into the houſe for his gun."

"His gun!" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madam, his gun; and then he came out into the court to watch him, preſently he ſees him come ſlowly down the avenue, and lean over the garden gate, and look up at the houſe for a long time; and I warrant he examined it well, and ſettled what window he ſhould break in at."

"But the gun," said Emily—"the gun!"

"Yes, madam, all in good time. Presently, Jean says, the robber opened the gate, and was coming into the court, and then he thought proper to ask him his business: so he called out again, and bade him say who he was, and what he wanted. But the man would do neither; but turned upon his heel, and passed into the garden again. Jean knew then well enough how it was, and so he fired after him."

"Fired!" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madam, fired off his gun; but, Holy Virgin! what makes you look so pale, madam? The man was not killed,—I dare say; but if he was, his comrades carried him off: for when Jean went in the morning, to look for the body, it was gone, and nothing to be seen but a track of blood on the ground. Jean followed it, that he might find out where the man got into the garden, but it was lost in the grass, and"——

Annette was interrupted: for Emily's spirits died away, and she would have fallen to the ground, if the girl had not caught her, and supported her to a bench, close to them.

When, after a long absence, her senses returned, Emily desired to be led to her apartment; and, though she trembled with anxiety to inquire further on the subject of her alarm, she found herself too ill at present, to dare the intelligence which it was possible she might receive of Valancourt. Having dismissed Annette, that she might weep and think at liberty, she endeavoured to recollect the exact air of the person, whom she had seen on the terrace, and still her fancy gave her the figure of Valancourt. She had, indeed, scarcely a doubt, that it was he whom she had seen, and at whom the gardener had fired: for the manner of the latter person, as described by Annette, was not that of a robber; nor did it appear probable, that a robber would have come alone, to break into a house so spacious as this.

When Emily thought herself sufficiently recovered, to listen to what Jean might have to relate, she sent for him; but he could inform her of no circumstance, that might lead to a knowledge of the person, who had been shot, or of the consequence of the wound; and, after severely reprimanding him, for having fired with bullets, and ordering diligent inquiry to be made in the neighbourhood for the discovery of the wounded person, she dismissed him, and herself remained in the same state of terrible suspense. All the tenderness she had ever felt for Valancourt, was recalled by the sense of his danger; and the more she considered the subject, the more her conviction strengthened, that it

was he, who had visited the gardens, for the purpose of soothing the misery of disappointed affection, amidst the scenes of his former happiness.

"Dear madam," said Annette, when she returned, "I never saw you so affected before; I dare say the man is not killed."

Emily shuddered, and lamented bitterly the rashness of the gardener in having fired.

"I knew you would be angry enough about that, madam, or I should have told you before; and he knew so too; for, says he, 'Annette, say nothing about this to my lady. She lies on the other side of the house, so did not hear the gun, perhaps; but she would be angry with me, if she knew, seeing there is blood. But then,' says he, 'how is one to keep the garden clear, if one is afraid to fire at a robber, when one sees him?'"

"No more of this," said Emily, "pray leave me."

Annette obeyed, and Emily returned to the agonizing considerations, that had assailed her before, but which she, at length, endeavoured to sooth by a new remark. If the stranger was Valancourt, it was certain he had come alone, and it appeared, therefore, that he had been able to quit the gardens, without assistance; a circumstance which did not seem probable, had his wound been dangerous. With this consideration, she endeavoured to support herself, during the inquiries, that were making by her servants in the neighbourhood; but day after day came, and still closed in uncertainty, concerning this affair: and Emily suffering in silence, at length, drooped, and sunk under the pressure of her anxiety. She was attacked by a slow fever, and when she yielded to the persuasion of Annette to send for medical advice, the physicians prescribed little beside air, gentle excercise and amusement: but how was this last to be obtained? She, however, endeavoured to abstract her thoughts from the subject of her anxiety, by employing them in promoting that happiness in others, which she had lost herself; and, when the evening was fine, she usually took an airing, including in her ride the cottages of some of her tenants, on whose condition she made such observations, as often enabled her, unasked, to fulfil their wishes.

Her indisposition, and the business she engaged in, relative to this estate, had already protracted her stay at Tholouse, beyond the period she had formerly fixed for her departure to La Vallee; and now she was unwilling to leave the only place, where it seemed possible, that certainty could be obtained on the subject of her distress. But the time was come, when her presence was necessary at La Vallee, a letter from the Lady Blanche now informing

her, that the Count and herſelf, being then at the chateau of the Baron St. Foix, purpoſed to viſit her at La Vallee, on their way home as ſoon they ſhould be informed of her arrival there. Blanche added, that they made this viſit, with the hope of inducing her to return with them to Chateau-le-Blanc.

Emily having replied to the letter of her friend, and ſaid that ſhe ſhould be at La Vallee in a few days, made haſty preparations for the journey; and, in thus leaving Tholouſe, endeavoured to ſupport herſelf with a belief, that, if any fatal accident had happened to Valancourt, ſhe muſt in this interval have heard of it.

On the evening before her departure, ſhe went to take leave of the terrace and the pavilion. The day had been ſultry, but a light ſhower, that fell juſt before ſunſet, had cooled the air, and given that ſoft verdure to the woods and paſtures, which is ſo refreſhing to the eye; while the rain drops, ſtill trembling on the ſhrubs, glittered in the laſt yellow gleam, that lighted up the ſcene, and the air was filled with fragrance, exhaled by the late ſhower from herbs and flowers and from the earth itſelf. But the lovely proſpect, which Emily beheld from the terrace, was no longer viewed by her with delight; ſhe ſighed deeply as her eye wandered over it, and her ſpirits were in a ſtate of ſuch dejection, that ſhe could not think of her approaching return to La Vallee, without tears and ſeemed to mourn again the death of her father, as if it had been an event of yeſterday.

Having reached the pavilion, ſhe ſeated herſelf at the open lattice, and while her eyes ſettled on the diſtant mountains, that overlooked Gaſcony, ſtill gleaming on the horizon, though the ſun had now left the plains below, "Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "I return to your long loſt ſcenes, but ſhall meet no more the parents, that were wont to render them delightful! no more ſhall ſee the ſmile of welcome, or hear the well known voice of fondneſs:—all will now be cold and ſilent in what was once my happy home."

Tears ſtole down her cheek, as the remembrance of what that home had been, returned to her; but, after indulging her ſorrow for ſometime, ſhe checked it, accuſing herſelf of ingratitude in forgetting the friends, that ſhe poſſeſſed, while ſhe lamented thoſe that were departed; and ſhe at length, left the pavilion and the terrace, without having obſerved a ſhadow of Valancourt or of any other perſon.

CHAP. L.

"Ah happy hills! ah pleaſing ſhade!
Ah fields belov'd in vain!
Where once my careleſs childhood ſtray'd,
A ſtranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliſs beſtow
As waving freſh their gladſome wing,
My weary ſoul they ſeem to ſooth."

GRAY.

ON the following morning, Emily left Tholouſe at an early hour, and reached La Vallee about ſunſet. With the melancholy ſhe experienced on the review of a place which had been the reſidence of her parents, and the ſcene of her earlieſt delight, was mingled, after the firſt ſhock had ſubſided, a tender and undeſcribable pleaſure. For time had ſo far blunted the acuteneſs of her grief, that ſhe now courted every ſcene, that awakened the memory of her friends; in every room, where ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſee them, they almoſt ſeemed to live again; and ſhe felt that La Vallee was ſtill her happieſt home. One of the firſt apartments ſhe viſited, was that, which had been her father's library, and here ſhe ſeated herſelf in his arm chair, and, while ſhe contemplated, with tempered reſignation, the picture of paſt times, which her memory gave, the tears ſhe ſhed could ſcarcely be called thoſe of grief.

Soon after her arrival, ſhe was ſurpriſed by a viſit from the venerable M. Barreaux, who came impatiently to welcome the daughter of his late reſpected neighbour to her long deſerted home. Emily was comforted by the preſence of an old friend, and they paſſed an intereſting hour in converſing of former times, and in relating ſome of the circumſtances, that had occurred to each, ſince they parted.

The evening was ſo far advanced, when M. Barreaux left Emily, that ſhe could not viſit the garden that night; but, on the following morning, ſhe traced its long regretted ſcenes with fond impatience; and, as ſhe walked beneath the groves, which her father had planted, and where ſhe had ſo often ſauntered in affectionate converſation with him, his countenance, his ſmile, even the accents of his voice, returned with exactneſs to her fancy, and her heart melted to the tender recollections.

This, too, was his favourite ſeaſon of the year, at which they had often together admired the rich and variegated tints of theſe

woods and the magical effect of autumnal lights upon the mountains; and now, the view of these circumstances made memory eloquent. As she wandered pensively on, she fancied the following address

TO AUTUMN.

Sweet Autumn! how thy melancholy grace
Steals on my heart, as through these shades I wind!
Sooth'd by thy breathing sigh, I fondly trace
Each lonely image of the pensive mind!
Lov'd scenes, lov'd friends—long lost! around me rise,
And wake the melting thought, the tender tear!
That tear, that thought, which more than mirth I prize—
Sweet as the gradual tint, that paints thy year!
Thy farewel smile, with fond regret, I view,
Thy beaming lights, soft gliding o'er the woods;
Thy distant landscape, touch'd with yellow hue
While falls the lengthen'd gleam; thy winding floods,
Now veil'd in shade, save where the skiff's white sails
Swell to the breeze, and catch thy streaming ray.
But now, e'en now!—the partial vision fails,
And the wave smiles, as sweeps the cloud away!
Emblem of life!—Thus checquer'd is its plan,
Thus joy succeeds to grief—thus smiles the varied man!

One of Emily's earliest inquiries, after her arrival at La Vallee, was concerning Theresa, her father's old servant, whom it may be remembered that M. Quesnel had turned from the house when it was let, without any provision. Understanding that she lived in a cottage at no great distance, Emily walked thither, and, on approaching, was pleased to see, that her habitation was pleasantly situated on a green slope, sheltered by a tuft of oaks, and had an appearance of comfort and extreme neatness. She found the old woman within, picking vinestalks, who on perceiving her young mistress, was nearly overcome with joy.

"Ah! my dear young lady!" said she, "I thought I should never see you again in this world, when I heard you was gone to that outlandish country. I have been hardly used, since you went; I little thought they would have turned me out of my old master's family in my old age!"

Emily lamented the circumstance, and then assured her, that she would make her latter days comfortable, and expressed satisfaction, on seeing her in so pleasant an habitation.

Theresa thanked her with tears, adding, "Yes, mademoiselle, it is a very comfortable home, thanks to the kind friend

who took me out of my diſtreſs, when you was too far off to help me, and placed me here! I little thought!—but no more of that—"

"And who was this kind friend?" ſaid Emily: "whoever it was, I ſhall conſider him as mine alſo."

"Ah mademoiſelle! that friend forbade me to blazon the good deed—I muſt not ſay, who it was. But how you are altered ſince I ſaw you laſt! You look ſo pale now, and ſo thin, too; but then, there is my old maſter's ſmile! Yes, that will never leave you, any more than the goodneſs, that uſed to make him ſmile. Alas-a-day! the poor loſt a friend indeed, when he died!"

Emily was affected by this mention of her father, which Thereſa obſerving, changed the ſubject. "I heard, mademoiſelle," ſaid ſhe, "that Madame Cheron married a foreign gentleman, after all, and took you abroad how does ſhe do?"

Emily now mentioned her death. "Alas!" ſaid Thereſa, "if ſhe had not been my maſter's ſiſter, I ſhould never have loved her; ſhe was always ſo croſs. But how does that dear young gentleman do, M. Valancourt? he was an handſome youth, and a good one; is he well, mademoiſelle?"

Emily was much agitated.

"A bleſſing on him!" continued Thereſa. Ah, my dear young lady, you need not look ſo ſhy; I know all about it. Do you think that I do not know that he loves you? Why, when you was away, mademoiſelle, he uſed to come to the chateau, and walk about it, ſo diſconſolate! He would go into every room in the lower part of the houſe, and, ſometimes, he would ſit himſelf down in a chair, with his arms acroſs, and his eyes on the floor, and there he would ſit, and think, and think for the hour together. He uſed to be very fond of the ſouth parlour, becauſe I told him it uſed to be yours; and there he would ſtay, looking at the pictures, which I ſaid you drew, and playing upon your lute, that hung up by the window, and reading in your books till ſunſet, and then he muſt go back to his brother's chateau. And then——"

"It is enough, Thereſa," ſaid Emily.—"How long have you lived in this cottage—and how can I ſerve you? will you remain here, or return and live with me?"

"Nay, mademoiſelle!" ſaid Thereſa, "do not be ſo ſhy to your poor old ſervant. I am ſure it is no diſgrace to like ſuch a good young gentleman."

A deep ſigh eſcaped from Emily.

"Ah! how he did love to talk of you! I loved him for that. Nay, for that matter, he liked to hear me talk, for he did not ſay much himſelf. But I ſoon found out what he came to the chateau about. Then, he would go into the garden, and down to the terrace, and ſit under that great tree there, for the day together, with one of your books in his hand; but he did not read much, I fancy; for one day I happened to go that way, and I heard ſomebody talking. Who can be here? ſays I: I am ſure I let nobody into the garden, but the Chevalier! So I walked ſoftly to ſee who it could be; and behold it was the Chevalier himſelf, talking to himſelf about you. And he repeated your name, and ſighed ſo! and ſaid he had loſt you for ever, for that you would never return for him. I thought he was out in his reckoning there, but I ſaid nothing, and ſtole away."

"No more of this trifling," ſaid Emily, awakening from her reverie: "it diſpleaſes me."

"But when M. Queſnel let the chateau, I thought it would have broke the Chevalier's heart."

"Thereſa," ſaid Emily ſeriouſly, "you muſt name the Chevalier no more!"

"Not name him, mademoiſelle!" cried Thereſa: "what times are come up now? Why I love the Chevalier next to my old maſter and you, mademoiſelle."

"Perhaps your love was not well beſtowed, then," replied Emily, trying to conceal her tears; "but, however that might be, we ſhall meet no more."

"Meet no more!—not well beſtowed!" exclaimed Thereſa. "What do I hear? No, mademoiſelle, my love was well beſtowed, for it was the Chevalier Valancourt, who gave me this cottage, and has ſupported me in my old age, ever ſince M. Queſnel turned me from my maſter's houſe."

"The Chevalier Valancourt!" ſaid Emily, trembling extremely.

"Yes, mademoiſelle, he himſelf, though he made me promiſe not to tell; but how could one help, when one heard him ill ſpoken of? Ah! dear young lady, you may well weep, if you have behaved unkindly to him, for a more tender heart than his never young gentleman had. He found me out in my diſtreſs when you was too far off to help me; and M. Queſnel refuſed to do ſo, and bade me go to ſervice again—Alas! I was too old for that!—The Chevalier found me, and bought me this cottage, and gave me money to furniſh it, and bade me ſeek out another poor woman to live with me; and he ordered his broth-

er's ſteward to pay me, every quarter, that which has ſupported me in comfort. Think then, mademoiſelle, whether I have not reaſon to ſpeak well of the Chevalier. And there are others who could have afforded it better than he: and I am afraid he has hurt himſelf by his generoſity, for quarter day is gone by long ſince, and no money for me! But do not weep ſo, mademoiſelle: youarenot ſorry ſurely to hear of the poor Chevalier's goodneſs."

"Sorry!" ſaid Emily, and wept the more. "But how long is it ſince you have ſeen him?"

"Not this many a day, mademoiſelle."

"When did you hear of him?" inquired Emily, with increaſed emotion.

"Alas! never ſince he went away ſo ſuddenly into Languedoc; and he was but juſt come from Paris then, or I ſhould have ſeen him, I am ſure. Quarter day is gone by long ſince, and, as I ſaid, no money for me; and I begin to fear ſome harm has happened to him: and if I was not ſo far from Eſtuviere, and ſo lame, I ſhould have gone to inquire before this time; and I have nobody to ſend ſo far.

Emily's anxiety, as to the fate of Valancourt, was now ſcarcely endurable, and, ſince propriety would not ſuffer her to ſend to the chateau of his brother, ſhe requeſted that Thereſa would immediately hire ſome perſon to go to his ſteward from herſelf, and, when he aſked for the quarterage due to her, to make inquiries concerning Valancourt. But ſhe firſt made Thereſa promiſe never to mention her name in this affair, or ever with that of the Chevalier Valancourt; and her former faithfulneſs to M. St. Aubert induced Emily to confide in her aſſurances. Thereſa now joyfully undertook to procure a perſon for this errand, and then Emily, after giving her a ſum of money to ſupply her with preſent comforts, returned, with ſpirits heavily oppreſſed, to her home, lamenting, more than ever, that an heart, poſſeſſed of ſo much benevolence as Valancourt's, ſhould have been contaminated by the vices of the world, but affected by the delicate affection, which his kindneſs to her old ſervant expreſſed for herſelf.

CHAP. LI.

———"Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:
Good things of day begin to droop, and drowze:
While night's black agents to their preys do rouze."

MACBETH.

MEANWHILE Count De Villefort and Lady Blanche had paſſed a pleaſant fortnight at the chateau de St. Foix, with the Baron and Baroneſs, during which they made frequent excurſions among the mountains, and were delighted with the romantic wildneſs of Pyrenean ſcenery. It was with regret, that the Count bade adieu to his old friends, although with the hope of being ſoon united with them in one family; for it was ſettled, that M. St. Foix, who now attended them into Gaſcony, ſhould receive the hand of the Lady Blanche, upon their arrival at Chateau-le-Blanc. As the road, from the Baron's reſidence to La Vallee, was over ſome of the wildeſt tract of the Pyrenees, and where a carriage wheel had never paſſed, the Count hired mules for himſelf and his family, as well as a couple of ſtout guides, who were well armed, informed of all the paſſes of the mountains, and who boaſted, too, that they were acquainted with every brake and dingle in the way, could tell the names of all the higheſt points of this chain of Alps, knew every foreſt, that ſpread along their narrow vallies, the ſhalloweſt part of every torrent they muſt croſs, and the exact diſtance of every goat-herd's and hunter's cabin they ſhould have occaſion to paſs,—which laſt article of learning required no very capacious memory, for even ſuch ſimple inhabitants were but thinly ſcattered over theſe wilds.

The Count left the chateau de St. Foix, early in the morning, with an intention of paſſing the night at a little inn upon the mountains, about half way to La Vallee, of which his guides had informed him; and, though this was frequented chiefly by Spaniſh muleteers, on their route into France, and, of courſe, would afford only ſorry accommodation, the Count had no alternative, for it was the only place like an inn, on the road.

After a day of admiration and fatigue, the travellers found themſelves, about ſunſet, in a woody valley, overlooked, on every ſide, by abrupt heights. They had proceeded for many leagues, without ſeeing a human habitation, and had only heard, now and then, at a diſtance, the melancholy tinkling of a ſheep-bell; but now they caught the notes of merry muſic, and preſently ſaw,

within a little green receſs among the rocks, a group of mountaineers, tripping through a dance. The Count, who could not look upon the happineſs, any more than on the miſery of others, with indifference, halted to enjoy this ſcene of ſimple pleaſure. The group before him conſiſted of French and Spaniſh peaſants, the inhabitants of a neighbouring hamlet, ſome of whom were performing a ſprightly dance, the women with caſtanets in their hands, to the ſounds of a lute and a tamborine, till, from the briſk melody of France, the muſic ſoftened into a ſlow movement, to which two female peaſants danced a Spaniſh Pavan.

The Count, comparing this with the ſcenes of ſuch gaiety as he had witneſſed at Paris, where falſe taſte painted the features, and, while it vainly tried to ſupply the glow of nature, concealed the charms of animation—where affectation ſo often diſtorted the air, and vice perverted the manners—ſighed to think, that natural graces and innocent pleaſures flouriſhed in the wilds of ſolitude, while they drooped amidſt the concourſe of poliſhed ſociety. But the lengthening ſhadows reminded the travellers, that they had no time to loſe; and, leaving this joyous group, they purſued their way towards the little inn, which was to ſhelter them from the night.

The rays of the ſetting ſun now threw a yellow gleam upon the foreſts of pine and cheſnut, that ſwept down the lower region of the mountains, and gave reſplendent tints to the ſnowy points above. But ſoon, even this light faded faſt, and the ſcenery aſſumed a more tremenduous appearance, inveſted with the obſcurity of twilight. Where the torrent had been ſeen, it was now only heard; where the wild cliffs had diſplayed every variety of form and attitude a dark maſs of mountains now alone appeared; and the vale, which far, far below had opened its dreadful chaſm, the eye could no longer fathom. A melancholy gleam ſtill lingered on the ſummits of the higheſt Alps, overlooking the deep repoſe of evening, and ſeeming to make the ſtillneſs of the hour more awful.

Blanche viewed the ſcene in ſilence, and liſtened with enthuſiaſm to the murmur of the pines, that extended in dark lines along the mountains, and to the faint voice of the izard, among the rocks, that came at intervals on the air. But her enthuſiaſm ſunk into apprehenſion, when, as the ſhadows deepened, ſhe looked upon the doubtful precipice, that bordered the road, as well as on the various fantaſtic forms of danger, that glimmered through the obſcurity beyond it; and ſhe aſked her father, how far they were from the inn, and whether he did not conſider the

road to be dangerous at this late hour. The Count repeated the firſt queſtion to the guides, who returned a doubtful anſwer, adding, that when it was darker, it would be ſafeſt to reſt till the moon roſe. "It is ſcarcely ſafe to proceed now," ſaid the Count; but the guides aſſuring him that there was no danger, went on. Blanche, revived by this aſſurance, again indulged a penſive pleaſure, as ſhe watched the progreſs of twilight gradually ſpreading its tints over the woods and mountains, and ſtealing from the eye every minuter feature of the ſcene, till the grand outlines of nature alone remained. Then fell the ſilent dews, and every wild flower, and aromatic plant, that bloomed among the cliffs, breathed forth its ſweetneſs; then, too, when the mountain-bee had crept into its bloſſomed bed, and the hum of every little inſect, that had floated gaily in the ſunbeam, was huſhed, the ſound of many ſtreams, not heard till now, murmured at a diſtance. The bats alone, of all the animals inhabiting this region, ſeemed awake; and, while they flitted acroſs the ſilent path, which Blanche was purſuing, ſhe remembered the following lines which Emily had given her:

TO THE BAT.

From haunt of man, from day's obtruſive glare,
Thou ſhroud'ſt thee in the ruin's ivy'd tow'r,
Or in ſome ſhadowy glen's romantic bow'r,
Where wizard forms their myſtic charms prepare,
Where Horror lurks, and ever-boding Care!
But, at the ſweet and ſilent ev'ning hour,
When clos'd in ſleep is ev'ry languid flow'r,
Thou lov'ſt to ſport upon the twilight air,
Mocking the eye, that would thy courſe purſue,
In many a wanton-round, claſſic, gay,
Thou flit'ſt athwart the penſive wand'rer's way,
As his lone footſteps print the mountain-dew.
From Indian iſles thou com'ſt, with ſummer's car,
Twilight thy love—thy guide her beaming ſtar!

To a warm imagination, the dubious forms, that float, half veiled in darkneſs, afford a higher delight, than the moſt diſtinct ſcenery, that the ſun can ſhew. While the fancy thus wanders over landſcapes partly of its own creation, a ſweet complacency ſteals upon the mind, and

Refines it all to ſubtleſt feeling,
Bids the tear of rapture roll.

The diſtant note of a torrent, the weak trembling of the breeze among the woods, or the far-off ſound of a human voice,

now loſt and heard again, are circumſtances which wonderfully heighten the enthuſiaſtic tone of the mind. The young St. Foix, who ſaw the preſentations of a fervid fancy, and felt whatever enthuſiaſm could ſuggeſt, ſometimes interrupted the ſilence, which the reſt of the party ſeemed by mutual conſent to preſerve, remarking and pointing out to Blanche the moſt ſtriking effect of the hour upon the ſcenery; while Blanche, whoſe apprehenſions were beguiled by the converſation of her lover, yielded to the taſte ſo congenial to his, and they converſed in a low reſtrained voice, the effect of the penſive tranquillity, which twilight and the ſcene inſpired rather than of any fear that they ſhould be heard. But, while the heart was thus ſoothed to tenderneſs, St. Foix gradually mingled, with his admiration of the country, a mention of his affection; and he continued to ſpeak, and Blanche to liſten, till the mountains, the woods, and the magical illuſions of twilight were remembered no more.

The ſhadows of evening ſoon ſhifted to the gloom of night, which was ſomewhat anticipated by the vapours, that, gathering faſt round the mountains, rolled in dark wreathes along their ſides; and the guides propoſed to reſt, till the moon ſhould riſe, adding, that they thought a ſtorm was coming on. As they looked round for a ſpot, that might afford ſome kind of ſhelter, an object was perceived obſcurely through the duſk, on a point of rock, a little way down the mountain, which they imagined to be a hunter's or a ſhepherd's cabin, and the party, with cautious ſteps, proceeded towards it. Their labour, however, was not rewarded, or their apprehenſions ſoothed; for, on reaching the object of their ſearch, they diſcovered a monumental croſs, which marked the ſpot to have been polluted by murder.

The darkneſs would not permit them to read the inſcription; but the guides knew this to be a croſs, raiſed to the memory of a Count de Beliard, who had been murdered here by a hoard of banditti, that had infeſted this part of the Pyrenees, a few years before; and the uncommon ſize of the monument ſeemed to juſtify the ſuppoſition, that it was erected for a perſon of ſome diſtinction. Blanche ſhuddered, as ſhe liſtened to ſome horrid particulars of the Count's fate, which one of the guides related in a low, reſtrained tone, as if the ſound of his own voice frightened him; but, while they lingered at the croſs, attending to his narrative, a flaſh of lightning glanced upon the rocks, thunder muttered at a diſtance, and the travellers, now alarmed, quitted this ſcene of ſolitary horror, in ſearch of ſhelter.

Having regained their former track, the guides, as they paſſed on, endeavoured to intereſt the Count by various ſtrokes of

robbery, and even of murder, which had been perpetrated in the very places they muſt unavoidably paſs, with accounts of their own dauntleſs courage and wonderful eſcapes. The chief guide, or rather he, who was the moſt completely armed, drawing forth one of the four piſtols that were tucked into his belt, ſwore, that it had ſhot three robbers within the year. He then brandiſhed a claſp-knife of enormous length, and was going to recount the wonderful execution it had done, when St. Foix, perceiving, that Blanche was terrified, interrupted him. The Count, meanwhile, ſecretly laughing at the terrible hiſtories and extravagant boaſtings of the man, reſolved to humour him, and, telling Blanche in a whiſper, his deſign, began to recount ſome exploits of his own, which infinitely exceeded any related by the guide.

To theſe ſurpriſing circumſtances he ſo artfully gave the colouring of truth, that the courage of the guides was viſibly affected by them, who continued ſilent, long after the Count had ceaſed to ſpeak. The loquacity of the chief hero thus laid aſleep, the vigilance of his eyes and ears ſeemed more thoroughly awakened, for he liſtened with much appearance of anxiety, to the deep thunder, which murmured at intervals, and often pauſed, as the breeze, that was now riſing, ruſhed among the pines. But, when he made a ſudden halt before a tuft of cork trees, that projected over the road, and drew forth a piſtol, before he would venture to brave the banditti which might lurk behind it, the Count could no longer refrain from laughter.

Having now, however, arrived at a level ſpot, ſomewhat ſheltered from the air, by overhanging cliffs and by a wood of larch, that roſe over a precipice on the left, and the guides being yet ignorant how far they were from the inn, the travellers determined to reſt, till the moon ſhould riſe, or the ſtorm diſperſe. Blanche, recalled, to a ſenſe of the preſent moment, looked on the ſurrounding gloom, with terror; but giving her hand to St. Foix, ſhe alighted, and the whole party entered a kind of cave, if ſuch it could be called, which was only a ſhallow cavity, formed by the curve of impending rocks. A light being ſtruck, a fire was kindled, whoſe blaze afforded ſome degree of cheerfulneſs and no ſmall comfort, for, though the day had been hot, the night air of this mountainous region was chilling; a fire was partly neceſſary alſo to keep off the wolves, with which thoſe wilds were infeſted.

Proviſions being ſpread upon a projection of the rock, the Count and his family partook of a ſupper, which, in a ſcene leſs rude, would certainly have been thought leſs excellent.

When the repaſt was finiſhed, St. Foix, impatient for the moon, ſauntered along the precipice, to a point, that fronted the eaſt; but all was yet wrapt in gloom, and the ſilence of night was broken only by the murmuring of woods, that waved far below, or by diſtant thunder, and, now and then, by the faint voices of the party he had quitted. He viewed, with emotions of awful ſublimity, the long volumes of ſulphurous clouds, that floated along the upper and middle regions of the air, and the lightnings, that flaſhed from them, ſometimes ſilently, and, at others, followed by ſullen peals of thunder, which the mountains feebly prolonged, while the whole horizon, and the abyſs, on which he ſtood, were diſcovered in the momentary light. Upon the ſucceeding darkneſs, the fire, which had been kindled in the cave, threw a partial gleam, illumining ſome points of the oppoſite rocks, and the ſummits of pine woods, that hung beetling on the cliffs below, while their receſſes ſeemed to frown in deeper ſhade.

St. Foix ſtopped to obſerve the picture, which the party in the cave preſented, where the elegant form of Blanche was finely contraſted by the majeſtic figure of the Count, who was ſeated by her on a rude ſtone, and each was rendered more impreſſive by the groteſque habits and ſtrong features of the guides and other attendants, who were in the back ground of the piece.—The effect of the light, too, was intereſting; on the ſurrounding figures it threw a ſtrong, though pale gleam, and glittered on their bright arms; while upon the foliage of a gigantic larch, that impended its ſhade over the cliff above, appeared a red, duſky tint, deepening almoſt imperceptibly into the blackneſs of night.

While St. Foix contemplated the ſcene, the moon, broad and yellow, roſe over the eaſtern ſummits, from among embattled clouds, and ſhewed dimly the grandeur of the heavens, the maſs of vapours, that rolled half way down the precipice beneath, and the doubtful mountains.

> "What dreadful pleaſure! there to ſtand ſublime,
> Like ſhipwreck'd mariner on deſart coaſt,
> And view th' enormous waſte of vapour, toſt
> In billows length'ning to th' horizon round!"*

From this romantic reverie he was awakened by the voices of the guides, repeating his name, which was reverbed from cliff to

* The Minſtrel.

cliff, till an hundred tongues ſeemed to call him; when he ſoon quieted the fears of the Count and the Lady Blanche, by returning to the cave. As the ſtorm however, ſeemed approaching, they did not quit their place of ſhelter; and the Count ſeated between his daughter and St. Foix, endeavoured to divert the fears of the former, and converſed on ſubjects, relating to the natural hiſtory of the ſcene, among which they wandered. He ſpoke of the mineral and foſſile ſubſtances, found in the depths of theſe mountains,—the veins of marble and granite, with which they abounded, the ſtrata of ſhells, diſcovered near their ſummits, many thouſand fathom above the level of the ſea, and at a vaſt diſtance from its preſent ſhore;—of the tremenduous chaſms and caverns of the rocks, the groteſque form of the mountains, and the various phænomena, that ſeem to ſtamp upon the world the hiſtory of the deluge. From the natural hiſtory he deſcended to the menſion events and circumſtances, connected with the civil ſtory of the Pyrenees; named ſome of the moſt remarkable fortreſſes, which France and Spain had erected in the paſſes of theſe mountains; and gave a brief account of ſome celebrated ſieges and encounters in early times, when Ambition firſt frightened Solitude from theſe her deep receſſes, made her mountains, which before had echoed only to the torrent's roar, tremble with the clang of arms, and, when man's firſt footſteps in her ſacred haunts had left the print of blood!

As Blanche ſat attentive to the narrative, that rendered the ſcenes doubly intereſting, and reſigned to ſolemn emotion, while ſhe conſidered that ſhe was on the very ground, once polluted by theſe events, her reverie was ſuddenly interrupted by a ſound that came in the wind.—It was the diſtant bark of a watch dog. The travellers liſtened with eager hope, and, as the wind blew ſtronger, fancied that the ſound came from no great diſtance; and, the guides having little doubt, that it proceeded from the inn they were in ſearch of, the Count determined to purſue his way. The moon now afforded a ſtronger, though ſtill an uncertain light as ſhe moved among broken clouds: and the travellers, led by the ſound, recommenced their journey along the brow of the precipice, preceded by a ſingle torch, that now contended with the moonlight; for the guides, believing they ſhould reach the inn ſoon after ſunſet, had neglected to provide more. In ſilent caution they followed the ſound, which was heard but at intervals, and which, after ſome time entirely ceaſed. The guides endeavoured, however, to point their courſe to the quarter, whence it had iſſued, but the deep roaring of a

torrent ſoon ſeized their attention, and preſently they came to a tremenduous chaſm of the mountain, which ſeemed to forbid all further progreſs. Blanche alighted from her mule, as did the Count and St. Foix, while the guides traverſed the edge in ſearch of a bridge, which, however rude, might convey them to the oppoſite ſide, and they, at length, confeſſed, what the Count had begun to ſuſpect, that they had been for ſometime doubtful of their way, and were now certain only, that they had loſt it.

At a little diſtance, was diſcovered a rude and dangerous paſſage, formed by an enormous pine, which thrown acroſs the chaſm, united the oppoſite precipices, and which had been felled probably by the hunter, to facilitate his chace of the izard, or the wolf. The whole party, the guides excepted, ſhuddered at the proſpect of croſſing this alpine bridge, whoſe ſides afforded no kind of defence, and from which to fall was to die. The guides, however, prepared to lead over the mules, while Blanche ſtood trembling on the brink, and liſtening to the roar of the waters, which were ſeen deſcending from rocks above, overhung with lofty pines, and thence precipitating themſelves into the deep abyſs, where their white ſurges gleamed faintly in the moonlight. The poor animals proceeded over this perilous bridge with inſtinctive caution, neither frightened by the noiſe of the cataract, or deceived by the gloom, which the impending foliage threw athwart their way. It was now, that the ſolitary torch, which had been hitherto of little ſervice, was found to be an ineſtimable treaſure; and Blanche, terrified, ſhrinking, but endeavouring to recollect all her firmneſs and preſence of mind, preceded by her lover and ſupported by her father, followed the red gleam of the torch, in ſafety, to the oppoſite cliff.

As they went on, the heights contracted, and formed a narrow paſs at the bottom of which, the torrent they had juſt croſſed, was heard to thunder. But they were again cheered by the bark of a dog, keeping watch, perhaps, over the flocks of the mountains, to protect them from the nightly deſcent of the wolves. The ſound was much nearer than before, and, while they rejoiced in the hope of ſoon reaching a place of repoſe, a light was ſeen to glimmer at a diſtance. It appeared at a height conſiderably above the level of their path, and was loſt and ſeen again, as if the waving branches of trees ſometimes excluded and then admitted its rays. The guides hallowed with all their ſtrength, but the ſound of no human voice was heard in return, and, at length, as a more effectual means of making themſelves known, they fired a piſtol. But, while they liſtened in anxious expec-

tation, the noiſe of the exploſion was alone heard, echoing among the rocks, and it gradually ſunk into a ſilence, which no friendly hint of man diſturbed. The light, however, that had been ſeen before, now became plainer, and, ſoon after, voices were heard indiſtinctly on the wind; but, upon the guides repeating the call, the voices ſuddenly ceaſed, and the light diſappeared.

The Lady Blanche was now almoſt ſinking beneath the preſſure of anxiety, fatigue and apprehenſion, and the united efforts of the Count and St. Foix could ſcarcely ſupport her ſpirits. As they continued to advance, an object was perceived on a point of rock above, which the ſtrong rays of the moon then falling on it, appeared to be a watch tower. The Count, from its ſituation and ſome other circumſtances, had little doubt that it was ſuch, and believing, that the light had proceeded from thence, he endeavoured to reanimate his daughter's ſpirits by the near proſpect of ſhelter and repoſe, which, however rude the accommodation, a ruined watch tower might afford.

"Numerous watch towers have been erected among the Pyrenees," ſaid the Count, anxious only to call Blanche's attention from the ſubject of her fears; "and the method by which they give intelligence of the approach of the enemy, is, you know, by fires, kindled on the ſummits of theſe edifices. Signals have thus, ſometimes, been communicated from poſt to poſt along a frontier line of ſeveral hundred miles in length. Then, as occaſion may require, the lurking armies emerge from their fortreſſes and the foreſts, and march forth to defend, perhaps, the entrance of ſome grand paſs, where, planting themſelves on the heights, they aſſail their aſtoniſhed enemies, who wind along the glen below, with fragments of the ſhattered cliff, and pour death and defeat upon them. The ancient forts, and watch towers, overlooking the grand paſſes of the Pyrenees, are carefully preſerved; but ſome of thoſe in inferior ſtations have been ſuffered to fall into decay, and are now frequently converted into the more peaceful habitation of the hunter, or the ſhepherd, who after a day of toil, retires hither, and, with his faithful dogs, forgets, near a cheerful blaze, the labour of the chace, or the anxiety of collecting his wandering flocks, while he is ſheltered from the nightly ſtorm."

"But are they always thus peacefully inhabited?" ſaid the Lady Blanche.

"No," replied the Count, "they are ſometimes the aſylum of French and Spaniſh ſmugglers, who croſs the mountains with contraband goods from their reſpective countries, and the latter

are particularly numerous, againſt whom ſtrong parties of the king's troops are ſometimes ſent. But the deſperate reſolution of theſe adventurers, who, knowing, that, if they are taken, they muſt expiate the breach of the law by the moſt cruel death, travel in large parties, well armed, often daunts the courage of the ſoldiers. The ſmugglers, who ſeek only ſafety, never engage, when they can poſſibly avoid it; the military, alſo, who know, that in theſe encounters, danger is certain, and glory almoſt unattainable, are equally reluctant to fight; an engagement, therefore, very ſeldom happens, but, when it does, it never concludes till after the moſt deſperate and bloody conflict. You are inattentive, Blanche," added the Count; "I have wearied you with a dull ſubject; but ſee, yonder, in the moonlight, is the edifice we have been in ſearch of, and we are fortunate to be ſo near it, before the ſtorm burſts."

Blanche, looking up, perceived that they were at the foot of the cliff, on whoſe ſummit the building ſtood, but no light now iſſued from it; the barking of the dog too had, for ſometime, ceaſed, and the guides began to doubt, whether this was really the object of their ſearch. From the diſtance, at which they ſurveyed it, ſhewn imperfectly by a cloudy moon, it appeared to be of more extent than a ſingle watch tower; but the difficulty was how to aſcend the height, whoſe abrupt declivities ſeemed to afford no kind of path way.

While the guides carried forward the torch to examine the cliff, the Count, remaining with Blanche and St. Foix at its foot, under the ſhadow of the woods, endeavoured again to beguile the time by converſation, but again anxiety abſtracted the mind of Blanche; and he then conſulted, apart with St. Foix, whether, it would be adviſable, ſhould a path be found, to venture to an edifice, which might poſſibly harbour banditti. They conſidered, that their own party was not ſmall, and that ſeveral of them were well armed; and, after enumerating the dangers, to be incurred by paſſing the night in the open wild, expoſed, perhaps, to the effects of a thunder ſtorm, there remained not a doubt, that they ought to endeavour to obtain admittance to the edifice above, at any hazard reſpecting the inhabitants it might harbour; but the darkneſs and the dead ſilence, that ſurrounded it, appeared to contradict the probability of its being inhabited at all.

A ſhout from the guides arouſed their attention, after which, in a few minutes, one of the Count's ſervants returned with intelligence, that a path was found, and they immediately haſten-

ed to join the guides, when they all aſcended a little winding way cut in the rock among thickets of dwarf wood, and, after much toil and ſome danger, reached the ſummit, where ſeveral ruined towers, ſurrounded by a maſſy wall, roſe to their view, partially illumined by the moonlight. The ſpace around the building was ſilent, and apparently forſaken, but the Count was cautious; "Step ſoftly," ſaid he, in a low voice, "while we reconnoitre the edifice."

Having proceeded ſilently along for ſome paces, they ſtopped at a gate, whoſe portals were terrible even in ruins, and, after a moment's heſitation, paſſed on to the court of entrance, but pauſed again at the head of a terrace, which, branching from it, ran along the brow of a precipice. Over this, roſe the main body of the edifice, which was now ſeen to be, not a watch tower, but one of thoſe ancient fortreſſes, that, from age and neglect, had fallen to decay. Many parts of it, however, appeared to be ſtill entire; it was built of grey ſtone, in the heavy Saxon-gothic ſtyle, with enormous round towers, buttreſſes of proportionable ſtrength, and the arch of the large gate, which ſeemed to open into the hall of the fabric, was round, as was that of a window above. The air of ſolemnity, which muſt ſo ſtrongly have characterized the pile even in the days of its early ſtrength, was now conſiderably heightened by its ſhattered battlements and half demoliſhed walls, and by the huge maſſes of ruin, ſcattered in its wide area, now ſilent and graſs grown. In this court of entrance ſtood the gigantic remains of an oak, that ſeemed to have flouriſhed and decayed with the building, which it ſtill appeared frowningly to protect by the few remaining branches, leafleſs and moſs grown, that crowned its trunk, and whoſe wide extent told how enormous the tree had been in a former age. This fortreſs was evidently once of great ſtrength, and, from its ſituation on a point of rock, impending over a deep glen, had been of great power to annoy, as well as to reſiſt; the Count, therefore, as he ſtood ſurveying it, was ſomewhat ſurpriſed, that it had been ſuffered, ancient as it was, to ſink into ruins, and its preſent lonely and deſerted air excited in his breaſt emotions of melancholy awe. While he indulged, for a moment, theſe emotions, he thought he heard a ſound of remote voices ſteal upon the ſtillneſs, from within the building, the front of which he again ſurveyed with ſcrutinizing eyes, but yet no light was viſible. He now determined to walk round the fort, to that remote part of it, whence he thought the voices had ariſen, that he might examine whether any light could be diſcerned there, before he ventured to

knock at the gate; for this purpoſe, he entered upon the terrace, where the remains of cannon were yet apparent in the thick walls, but he had not proceeded many paces when his ſteps were ſuddenly arreſted by the loud barking of a dog within, and which he fancied to be the ſame, whoſe voice had been the means of bringing the travellers thither. It now appeared certain, that the place was inhabited, and the Count returned to conſult again with St. Foix, whether he ſhould try to obtain admittance, for its wild aſpect had ſomewhat ſhaken his former reſolution; but, after a ſecond conſultation, he ſubmitted to the conſiderations, which before determined him, and which were ſtrengthened by the diſcovery of the dog, that guarded the fort, as well as by the ſtillneſs that pervaded it. He therefore, ordered one of his ſervants to knock at the gate, who was advancing to obey him, when a light appeared through the loop hole of one of the towers, and the Count called loudly, but, receiving no anſwer, he went up to the gate himſelf, and ſtruck upon it with an iron pointed pole, which had aſſiſted him to climb the ſteep. When the echoes had ceaſed, that this blow had awakened the renewed barking, and there were now more than one dog,—was the only ſound, that was heard. The Count ſtepped back, a few paces, to obſerve whether the light was in the tower, and, perceiving, that it was gone, he returned to the portal, and had lifted the pole to ſtrike again, when again he fancied he heard the murmur of voices within, and pauſed to liſten. He was confirmed in the ſuppoſition, but they were too remote, to be heard otherwiſe than in a murmur, and the Count now let the pole fall heavily upon the gate; when almoſt immediately a profound ſilence followed. It was apparent, that the people within had heard the ſound, and their caution in admitting ſtrangers gave him a favourable opinion of them. "They are either hunters or ſhepherds," ſaid he "who like ourſelves, have probably ſought ſhelter from the night within theſe walls, and are fearful of admitting ſtrangers, leſt they ſhould prove robbers. I will endeavour to remove their fears." So ſaying, he called aloud, "We are friends, who aſk ſhelter from the night." In a few moments, ſteps were heard within, which approached, and a voice then inquired——"Who calls?" "Friends," repeated the Count; "open the gates and you ſhall know more." Strong bolts were now heard to be undrawn, and a man, armed with a hunting ſpear, appeared. "What is it you want at this hour?" ſaid he. The Count beckoned his attendants, and then anſwered, that he wiſhed to inquire the way to the neareſt cabin. "Are

you ſo little acquainted with theſe mountains," ſaid the man, "as not to know, that there is none, within ſeveral leagues? I cannot ſhew you the way; you muſt ſeek it—there is a moon." Saying this, he was cloſing the gate, and the Count was turning away, half diſappointed and half afraid, when another voice was heard from above, and, on looking up, he ſaw a light, and a man's face, at the grate of the portal. "Stay, friend, you have loſt your way?" ſaid the voice. "You are hunters, I ſuppoſe, like ourſelves: I will be with you preſently." The voice ceaſed, and the light diſappeared. Blanche had been alarmed by the appearance of the man, who had opened the gate, and ſhe now entreated her father to quit the place; but the Count had obſerved the hunter's ſpear, which he carried; and the words from the tower encouraged him to await the event. The gate was ſoon opened, and ſeveral men in hunters' habits, who had heard above what had paſſed below, appeared, and, having liſtened ſometime to the Count, told him he was welcome to reſt there for the night. They then preſſed him with much courteſy, to enter, and to partake of ſuch fare as they were about to ſit down to. The Count, who had obſerved them attentively while they ſpoke, was cautious, and ſomewhat ſuſpicious; but he was alſo weary, fearful of the approaching ſtorm, and of encountering alpine heights in the obſcurity of night; being likewiſe ſomewhat confident in the ſtrength and number of his attendants, he, after ſome further conſideration, determined to accept the invitation. With this reſolution he called his ſervants, who, advancing round the tower, behind which ſome of them had ſilently liſtened to this conference, followed their Lord, the Lady Blanche, and St. Foix into the fortreſs. The ſtrangers led them on to a large and rude hall, partially ſeen by a fire, that blazed at its extremity, round which four men, in the hunter's dreſs, were ſeated, and on the hearth were ſeveral dogs ſtretched in ſleep. In the middle of the hall ſtood a large table, and over the fire ſome part of an animal was boiling. As the Count approached, the men aroſe, and the dogs, half raiſing themſelves, looked fiercely at the ſtrangers, but, on hearing their maſters' voices, kept their poſtures on the hearth.

Blanche looked round this gloomy and ſpacious hall; then at the men, and to her father, who, ſmiling cheerfully at her, addreſſed himſelf to the hunters. "This is an hoſpitable hearth," ſaid he, "the blaze of a fire is reviving after having wandered ſo long in theſe dreary wilds. Your dogs are tired; what ſucceſs have you had?" "Such as we uſually have," replied one

of the men, who had been ſeated in the hall, "we kill our game with tolerable certainty." "Theſe are fellow hunters," ſaid one of the men who had brought the Count hither, "that have loſt their way, and I have told them there is room enough in the fort for us all." "Very true, very true" replied his companion, "What luck have you had in the chace, brothers? We have killed two izards, and that you will ſay is pretty well." "You miſtake, friend," ſaid the Count, "we are not hunters, but travellers; but, if you will admit us to hunters' fare, we ſhall be well contented, and will repay your kindneſs." "Sit down then, brother," ſaid one of the men: "Jacques, lay more fuel on the fire, the kid will ſoon be ready; bring a ſeat for the lady too. Ma'amſelle, will you taſte our brandy? it is true Barcelona, and as bright as ever flowed from a keg." Blanche timidly ſmiled, and was going to refuſe, when her father prevented her, by taking, with a good humoured air, the glaſs offered to his daughter; and Monſ. St. Foix, who was ſeated next her, preſſed her hand, and gave her an encouraging look, but her attention was engaged by a man, who ſat ſilently by the fire, obſerving St. Foix, with a ſteady and earneſt eye.

"You lead a jolly life here," ſaid the Count. "The life of a hunter is a pleaſant and a healthy one; and the repoſe is ſweet, which ſucceeds to your labour."

"Yes," replied one of his hoſts, "our life is pleaſant enough. We live here only during the ſummer, and autumnal months; in winter, the place is dreary, and the ſwoln torrents, that deſcend, from the heights, put a ſtop to the chace."

"'Tis a life of liberty and enjoyment," ſaid the Count: "I ſhould like to paſs a month in your way very well."

"We find employment for our guns too," ſaid a man who ſtood behind the Count: "here are plenty of birds, of delicious flavour, that feed upon the wild thyme and herbs, that grow in the vallies. Now I think of it, there is a brace of birds hung up in the ſtone gallery; go fetch them, Jacques, we will have them dreſſed."

The Count now made inquiry, concerning the method of purſuing the chace among the rocks and precipices of theſe romantic regions, and was liſtening to a curious detail, when a horn was ſounded at the gate. Blanche looked timidly at her father, who continued to converſe on the ſubject of the chace, but whoſe countenance was ſomewhat expreſſive of anxiety, and who often turned his eyes towards that part of the hall neareſt the gate. The horn ſounded again, and a loud halloo ſucceeded. "Theſe

are ſome of our companions, returned from their day's labour," ſaid a man, going lazily from his ſeat towards the gate; and in a few minutes, two men appeared, each with a gun over his ſhoulder, and piſtols in his belt. "What cheer, my lads? what cheer?" ſaid they, as they approached. "What luck?" returned their companions: "have you brought home your ſupper? You ſhall have none elſe."

"Hah! who the devil have you brought home?" ſaid they in bad Spaniſh, on perceiving the Count's party, "are they from France, or Spain?—where did you meet with them?"

"They met with us, and a merry meeting too," replied his companion aloud in good French. "This chevalier, and his party, had loſt their way, and aſked a night's lodging in the fort." The others made no reply, but threw down a kind of knapſack, and drew forth ſeveral brace of birds. The bag ſounded heavily as it fell to the ground, and the glitter of ſome bright metal within, glanced on the eye of the Count, who now ſurveyed, with a more inquiring look, the man that held the knapſack. He was a tall robuſt figure, of a hard countenance, and had ſhort black hair, curling in his neck. Inſtead of the hunter's dreſs, he wore a faded military uniform; ſandals were laced on his broad legs, and a kind of ſhort trowſers hung from his waiſt. On his head he wore a leathern cap, ſomewhat reſembling in ſhape an ancient Roman helmet; but the brows that ſcowled beneath it, would have characterized thoſe of the barbarians, who conquered Rome, rather than thoſe of a Roman ſoldier. The Count, at length, turned away his eyes, and remained ſilent and thoughtful, till, again raiſing them, he perceived a figure ſtanding in an obſcure part of the hall, fixed in attentive gaze on St. Foix, who was converſing with Blanche, and did not obſerve this; but the Count, ſoon after, ſaw the ſame man, looking over the ſhoulder of the ſoldier as attentively at himſelf. He withdrew his eye, when that of the Count met it, who felt miſtruſt gathering faſt upon his mind, but feared to betray it in his countenance, and, forcing his features to aſſume a ſmile, addreſſed Blanche on ſome indifferent ſubject. When he again looked round, he perceived, that the ſoldier and his companion were gone.

The man, who was called Jacques, now returned from the ſtone gallery. "A fire is lighted there," ſaid he, "and the birds are dreſſing; the table too is ſpread there, for that place is warmer than this."

His companions approved of the removal, and invited their gueſts to follow to the gallery, of whom Blanche appeared diſ-

treſſed, and remained ſeated, and St. Foix looked at the Count, who ſaid, he preferred the comfortable blaze of the fire he was then near. The hunters, however, commended the warmth of the other apartment, and preſſed his removal with ſuch ſeeming courteſy, that the Count, half doubting, and half fearful of betraying his doubts, conſented to go. The long and ruinous paſſages, through which they went, ſomewhat daunted him, but the thunder, which now burſt in loud peals above, made it dangerous to quit this place of ſhelter, and he forbore to provoke his conductors by ſhewing that he diſtruſted them. The hunters led the way, with a lamp; the Count and St. Foix, who wiſhed to pleaſe their hoſts by ſome inſtances of familiarity, carried each a ſeat, and Blanche followed, with faltering ſteps. As ſhe paſſed on, part of her dreſs caught on a nail in the wall, and, while ſhe ſtopped, ſomewhat too ſcrupulouſly, to diſengage it, the Count, who was talking to St. Foix, and neither of whom obſerved the circumſtance, followed their conductor round an abrupt angle of the paſſage, and Blanche was left behind in darkneſs. The thunder prevented them from hearing her call, but, having diſengaged her dreſs, ſhe quickly followed, as ſhe thought, the way they had taken. A light that glimmered at a diſtance, confirmed this belief, and ſhe proceeded towards an open door, whence it iſſued, conjecturing the room beyond to be the ſtone gallery the men had ſpoken of. Hearing voices as ſhe advanced, ſhe pauſed within a few paces of the chamber, that ſhe might be certain whether ſhe was right, and from thence, by the light of a lamp, that hung from the ceiling, obſerved four men, ſeated round a table, over which they leaned in apparent conſultation. In one of them ſhe diſtinguiſhed the features of him, whom ſhe had obſerved, gazing at St. Foix, with ſuch deep attention; and who was now ſpeaking in an earneſt, though reſtrained voice, till, one of his companions ſeeming to oppoſe him, they ſpoke together in a loud and harſher tone. Blanche, alarmed by perceiving, that neither her father, or St. Foix were there, and terrified at the fierce countenances and manners of theſe men, was turning haſtily from the chamber, to purſue her ſearch of the gallery, when ſhe heard one of the men ſay:

"Let all diſpute end here. Who talks of danger? Follow my advice, and there will be none—ſecure *them*, and the reſt are an eaſy prey." Blanche, ſtruck with theſe words, pauſed a moment, to hear more. "There is nothing to be got by the reſt," ſaid one of his companions, "I am never for blood when

I can help it— diſpatch the two others, and our buſineſs is done, the reſt may go."

"May they ſo," exclaimed the firſt ruffian, with a tremendu-ous oath—"What! to tell how we have diſpoſed of their maſ-ters, and to ſend the kings troops to drag us to the wheel! You was always a choice adviſer—I warrant we have not yet forgot St. Thomas's eve laſt year."

Blanche's heart now ſunk with horror. Her firſt impulſe was to retreat from the door, but, when ſhe would have gone, her trembling frame refuſed to ſupport her, and having tottered a few paces, to a more obſcure part of the paſſage, ſhe was com-pelled to liſten to the dreadful councils of thoſe, who ſhe was no longer ſuffered to doubt, were banditti. In the next moment, ſhe heard the following words, "Why you would not murder the whole *gang?*"

"I warrant our lives are as good as theirs," replied his com-rade. "If we don't kill them they will hang us: better they ſhould die than we be hanged."

"Better, better," cried his comrades.

"To commit murder is a hopeful way of eſcaping the gal-lows!" ſaid the firſt ruffian—"many an honeſt fellow has run his head into the nooſe that way, though." There was a pauſe of ſome moments, during which they appeared to be conſidering.

"Confound thoſe fellows," exclaimed one of the robbers im-patiently, "they ought to have been here by this time; they will come back preſently with the old ſtory, and no booty: if they were here, our buſineſs would be plain and eaſy. I ſee we ſhall not be able to do the buſineſs to night, for our numbers are not equal to the enemy, and in the morning they will be for marching off, and how can we detain them without force?"

"I have been thinking of a ſcheme, that will do," ſaid one of his comrades; "if we can diſpatch the two chevaliers ſilent-ly, it will be eaſy to maſter the reſt."

"That's a plauſible ſcheme, in good faith," ſaid another with a ſmile of ſcorn—"If I can eat my way through the priſon wall, I ſhall be at liberty!—How can we diſpatch them *ſilently?*"

"By poiſon," replied his companions.

"Well ſaid; that will do," ſaid the ſecond ruffian, "that will give a lingering death too, and ſatisfy my revenge. Theſe barons ſhall take care how they again tempt our vengeance."

"I knew the ſon, the moment I ſaw him," ſaid the man, whom Blanche had obſerved gazing on St. Foix, "though he does not know me; the father I had almoſt forgotten."

"Well, you may say what you will," said the third ruffian, "but I don't believe he is the Baron, and I am as likely to know as any of you, for I was one of them, that attacked him, with our brave lads, that suffered."

"And was not I another?" said the first ruffian, "I tell you he is the Baron; but what does it signify whether he is or not? shall we let all this booty go out of our hands? It is not often we have such luck as this. While we run the chance of the wheel for smuggling a few pounds of tobacco, to cheat the king's manufactory, and of breaking our necks down the precipices in the chace of our food; and, now and then, rob a brother smuggler, or a straggling pilgrim, of what scarcely repays us the powder we fire at them, shall we let such a prize as this go? Why they have enough about them to keep us for ——"

"I am not for that, I am not for that," replied the third robber, "let us make the most of them: only, if this is the Baron, I should like to have a slash the more at him, for the sake of our brave comrades, that he brought to the gallows."

"Aye, aye, slash as much as you will," rejoined the first man, "but I tell you the Baron is a taller man."

"Confound your quibbling, said the second ruffian, "shall we let them go or not? If we stay here much longer, they will take the hint, and march off without our leave. Let them be who they will, they are rich, or why all those servants? Did you see the ring, he, you call the Baron, had on his finger?—it was diamond; but he has not got it on now: he saw me looking at it, I warrant, and took it off."

"Aye, and then there is the picture; did you see that? She has not taken that off," observed the first ruffian, it hangs at her neck; if it had not sparkled so, I should not have found it out, for it was almost hid by her dress; those are diamonds too, and a rare many of them there must be, to go round such a large picture."

"But how are we to manage this business?" said the second ruffian: "let us talk of that, there is no fear of there being booty enough, but how are we to secure it?"

"Aye, aye," said his comrades, "let us talk of that, and remember no time is to be lost."

"I am still for poison," observed the third, "but consider their number; why there are nine or ten of them, and armed too; when I saw so many at the gate, I was not for letting them in, you know, nor you either."

"I thought they might be some of our enemies," replied the second, "I did not so much mind numbers."

"But you muſt mind them now," rejoined his comrade, "or it will be worſe for you. We are not more than ſix, and how can we maſter ten by open force? I tell you we muſt give ſome of them a doſe, and the reſt may then be managed."

"I'll tell you a better way," rejoined the other impatiently, "draw cloſer."

Blanche, who had liſtened to this converſation, in an agony, which it would be impoſſible to deſcribe, could no longer diſtinguiſh what was ſaid, for the ruffians now ſpoke in lowered voices; but the hope, that ſhe might ſave her friends from the plot, if ſhe could find her way quickly to them, ſuddenly reanimated her ſpirits, and lent her ſtrength enough to turn her ſteps in ſearch of the gallery. Terror, however, and darkneſs conſpired againſt her, and, having moved a few yards, the feeble light, that iſſued from the chamber, no longer even contended with the gloom, and, her foot ſtumbling over a ſtep that croſſed the paſſage, ſhe fell to the ground.

The noiſe ſtartled the banditti, who became ſuddenly ſilent, and then all ruſhed to the paſſage, to examine whether any perſon was there, who might have overheard their councils. Blanche ſaw them approaching, and perceived their fierce and eager looks: but, before ſhe could raiſe herſelf, they diſcovered and ſeized her, and, as they dragged her towards the chamber they had quitted, her ſcreams drew from them horrible threatenings.

Having reached the room, they began to conſult what they ſhould do with her. "Let us firſt know what ſhe has heard," ſaid the chief robber. "How long have you been in the paſſage, lady, and what brought you there?"

"Let us firſt ſecure that picture," ſaid one of his comrades, approaching the trembling Blanche. "Fair lady, by your leave that picture is mine; come, ſurrender it, or I ſhall ſeize it."

Blanche, entreating their mercy, immediately gave up the miniature, while another of the ruffians fiercely interrogated her, concerning what ſhe had overheard of their converſation, when, her confuſion and terror too plainly telling what her tongue feared to confeſs, the ruffians looked expreſſively upon one another, and two of them withdrew to a remote part of the room, as if to conſult further.

"Theſe are diamonds by St. Peter!" exclaimed the fellow, who had been examining the miniature, "and here is a very pretty picture too, faith; as handſome a young chevalier, as you would wiſh to ſee by a ſummer's ſun. Lady, this is your ſpouſe, I warrant, for it is the ſpark, that was in your company juſt now."

Blanche, ſinking with terror, conjured him to have pity on her, and, delivering him her purſe, promiſed to ſay nothing of what had paſſed, if he would ſuffer her to return to her friends.

He ſmiled ironically, and was going to reply, when his attention was called off by a diſtant noiſe; and, while he liſtened, he graſped the arm of Blanche more firmly, as if he feared ſhe would eſcape from him, and ſhe again ſhrieked for help.

The approaching ſounds called the ruffians from the other part of the chamber. "We are betrayed," ſaid they; "but let us liſten a moment, perhaps it is only our comrades come in from the mountains, and if ſo, our work is ſure; liſten!"

A diſtant diſcharge of ſhot confirmed this ſuppoſition for a moment, but, in the next, the former ſounds drawing nearer, the claſhing of ſwords, mingled with voices of loud contention, and with heavy groans, were diſtinguiſhed in the avenue leading to the chamber. While the ruffians prepared their arms, they heard themſelves called by ſome of their comrades afar off, and then a ſhrill horn was ſounded without the fortreſs, a ſignal, it appeared, they too well underſtood; for three of them, leaving the Lady Blanche to the care of the fourth, inſtantly ruſhed from the chamber.

While Blanche, trembling, and nearly fainting, was ſupplicating for releaſe, ſhe heard amid the tumult, that approached, the voice of St. Foix, and ſhe had ſcarcely renewed her ſhriek, when the door of the room was thrown open, and he appeared, much disfigured with blood, and purſued by ſeveral ruffians. Blanche neither ſaw or heard any more; her head ſwam, her ſight failed, and ſhe became ſenſeleſs in the arms of the robber, who had detained her.

When ſhe recovered, ſhe perceived, by the gloomy light, that trembled round her, that ſhe was in the ſame chamber, but neither the Count, St. Foix or any other perſon appeared, and ſhe continued for ſometime entirely ſtill, and nearly in a ſtate of ſtupefaction. But, the dreadful images of the paſt returning, ſhe endeavoured to raiſe herſelf, that ſhe might ſeek her friends, when a ſullen groan, at a little diſtance, reminded her of St. Foix, and of the condition, in which ſhe had ſeen him enter this room; then, ſtarting from the floor, by a ſudden effort of horror, ſhe advanced to the place whence the ſound had proceeded, where a body was lying ſtretched upon the pavement, and where, by the glimmering light of a lamp, ſhe diſcovered the pale and disfigured countenance of St. Foix. Her horrors, at that moment, may be eaſily imagined. He was ſpeechleſs; his eyes

were half closed, and, on the hand, which she grasped in the agony of despair, cold damps had settled. While she vainly repeated his name, and called for assistance, steps approached, and a person entered the chamber, who, she soon perceived was not the Count, her father; but, what was her astonishment, when supplicating him to give his assistance to St. Foix, she discovered Ludovico! He scarcely paused to recognise her, but immediately bound up the wounds of the Chevalier, and, perceiving, that he had fainted probably from loss of blood, ran for water; but he had been absent only a few moments, when Blanche heard other steps approaching, and, while she was almost frantic with apprehension of the ruffians, the light of a torch flashed upon the walls, and then, Count De Villefort appeared, with an affrighted countenance, and breathless with impatience, calling upon his daughter. At the sound of his voice, she rose, and ran to his arms, while he, letting fall the bloody sword he held, pressed her to his bosom in a transport of gratitude and joy, and then hastily inquired for St. Foix, who now gave some signs of life. Ludovico soon after returning with water and brandy, the former was applied to his lips, and the latter to his temples and hands, and Blanche, at length, saw him unclose his eyes, and then heard him inquire for her; but the joy she felt, on this occasion, was interrupted by new alarms, when Ludovico said it would be necessary to remove Mons. St. Foix immediately, and added, "The banditti, that are out, my Lord, were expected home, an hour ago, and they will certainly find us, if we delay. That shrill horn, they know, is never sounded by their comrades but on most desperate occasions, and it echoes among the mountains for many leagues round. I have known them brought home by its sound even from the Pied de Melicant. Is any body standing watch at the great gate, my Lord?"

"Nobody," replied the Count; "the rest of my people are now scattered about I scarcely know where. Go, Ludovico, collect them together, and look out yourself, and listen if you hear the feet of mules."

Ludovico then hurried away, and the Count consulted as to the means of removing St. Foix, who could not have borne the motion of a mule, even if his strength would have supported him in the saddle.

While the Count was telling, that the banditti, whom they had found in the fort, were secured in the dungeon, Blanche observed that he was himself wounded, and that his left arm was

entirely uſeleſs; but he ſmiled at her anxiety, aſſuring her the wound was trifling.

The Count's ſervants, except two who kept watch at the gate, now appeared, and, ſoon after, Ludovico. "I think I hear mules coming along the glen, my Lord," ſaid he, "but the roaring of the torrent below will not let me be certain; however, I have brought what will ſerve the Chevalier," he added, ſhewing a bear's ſkin faſtened to a couple of long poles, which had been adapted for the purpoſe of bringing home ſuch of the banditti as happened to be wounded in their encounters. Ludovico ſpread it on the ground, and, placing the ſkins of ſeveral goats upon it, made a kind of bed, into which the Chevalier, who was however now much revived, was gently lifted; and, the poles being raiſed upon the ſhoulders of the guides, whoſe footing among theſe ſteeps could beſt be depended upon, he was borne along with an eaſy motion. Some of the Count's ſervants were alſo wounded—but not materially, and, their wounds being bound up, they now followed to the great gate. As they paſſed along the hall, a loud tumult was heard at ſome diſtance, and Blanche was terrified. "It is only thoſe villains in the dungeon, my Lady," ſaid Ludovico. "They ſeem to be burſting it open," ſaid the Count. "No, my Lord," replied Ludovico, "it has an iron door; we have nothing to fear from them; but let me go firſt, and look out from the rampart."

They quickly followed him, and found their mules browſing before the gates, where the party liſtened anxiouſly, but heard no ſound, except that of the torrent below and of the early breeze, ſighing among the branches of the old oak, that grew in the court; and they were now glad to perceive the firſt tints of dawn over the mountain tops. When they had mounted their mules, Ludovico undertaking to be their guide, led them by an eaſier path, than that by which they had formerly aſcended, into the glen. "We muſt avoid that valley to the eaſt, my Lord," ſaid he, "or we may meet the banditti; they went out that way in the morning."

The travellers, ſoon after, quitted this glen, and found themſelves in a narrow valley that ſtretched towards the north-weſt. The morning light upon the mountains now ſtrengthened faſt, and gradually diſcovered the green hillocks, that ſkirted the winding feet of the cliffs, tufted with cork tree, and ever-green oak. The thunder clouds being diſperſed, had left the ſky perfectly ſerene, and Blanche was revived by the freſh breeze, and by the view of verdure, which, the late rain had brightened.

Soon after, the ſun aroſe, when the dripping rocks, with the ſhrubs that fringed their ſummits, and many a turfy ſlope below, ſparkled in his rays. A wreath of miſt was ſeen, floating along the extremity of the valley, but the gale bore it before the travellers, and the ſunbeams gradually drew it up towards the ſummit of the mountains. They had proceeded about a league, when St. Foix having complained of extreme faintneſs, they ſtopped to give him refreſhment, and, that the men who bore him, might reſt. Ludovico had brought from the fort ſome flaſks of rich Spaniſh wine, which now proved a reviving cordial not only to St. Foix but to the whole party, though to him it gave only temporary relief, for it fed the fever that burned in his veins, and he could neither diſguiſe in his countenance the anguiſh he ſuffered, or ſuppreſs the wiſh, that he was arrived at the inn, where they had deſigned to paſs the preceding night.

While they thus repoſed themſelves under the ſhade of the dark green pines, the Count defired Ludovico to explain ſhortly, by what means he had diſappeared from the north apartment, how he came into the hands of the banditti, and how he had contributed ſo eſſentially to ſerve him, and his family, for to him he juſtly attributed their preſent deliverance. Ludovico was going to obey him, when ſuddenly they heard the echo of a piſtol-ſhot, from the way they had paſſed, and they roſe in alarm, haſtily to purſue their route.

CHAP. LII.

"Ah why did fate his ſteps decoy
In ſtormy paths to roam,
Remote from all congenial joy!"

BEATTIE.

EMILY, meanwhile, was ſtill ſuffering anxiety as to the fate of Valancourt; but Thereſa, having, at length, found a perſon, whom ſhe could entruſt on her errand to the ſteward, informed her, that the meſſenger would return on the following day; and Emily promiſed to be at the cottage, Thereſa being too lame to attend her.

In the evening, therefore, Emily ſet out alone for the cottage, with a melancholy foreboding, concerning Valancourt, while, perhaps, the gloom of the hour might contribute to depreſs her ſpirits. It was a grey autumnal evening towards the cloſe of the

ſeaſon; heavy miſts partially obſcured the mountains, and a chilling breeze, that ſighed among the beech woods, ſtrewed her path with ſome of their laſt yellow leaves. Theſe circling in the blaſt and foretelling the death of the year, gave an image of deſolation to her mind, and, in her fancy, ſeemed to announce the death of Valancourt. Of this ſhe had, indeed, more than once ſo ſtrong a preſentiment, that ſhe was on the point of returning home, feeling herſelf unequal to an encounter with the certainty ſhe anticipated, but, contending with her emotions, ſhe ſo far commanded them, as to be able to proceed.

While ſhe walked mournfully on, gazing on the long volumes of vapour, that poured upon the ſky, and watching the ſwallows toſſed along the wind, now diſappearing among tempeſtuous clouds, and then emerging for a moment, in circles upon the calmer air, the afflictions and viciſſitudes of her late life ſeemed pourtrayed in theſe fleeting images;—thus had ſhe been toſſed upon the ſtormy ſea of misfortune for the laſt year, with but ſhort intervals of peace, if peace that could be called, which was only the delay of evils. And now, when ſhe had eſcaped from ſo many dangers, was become independent of the will of thoſe, who had oppreſſed her, and found herſelf miſtreſs of a large fortune, now, when ſhe might reaſonably have expected happineſs, ſhe perceived that ſhe was as diſtant from it as ever. She would have accuſed herſelf of weakneſs and ingratitude in thus ſuffering a ſenſe of the various bleſſings ſhe poſſeſſed to be overcome by that of a ſingle misfortune, had this misfortune affected herſelf alone; but, when ſhe had wept for Valancourt even as living, tears of compaſſion had mingled with thoſe of regret, and while ſhe lamented a human being degraded to vice, and conſequently to miſery, reaſon and humanity claimed theſe tears, and fortitude had not yet taught her to ſeparate them from thoſe of love; in the preſent moments, however, it was not the certainty of his guilt, but the apprehenſion of his death (of a death alſo, to which ſhe herſelf, however innocently, appeared to have been in ſome degree inſtrumental) that oppreſſed her. This fear increaſed, as the means of certainty concerning it approached; and, when ſhe came within view of Thereſa's cottage, ſhe was ſo much diſordered, and her reſolution failed her ſo entirely, that, unable to proceed, ſhe reſted on a bank, beſide her path; where, as ſhe ſat, the wind that groaned ſullenly among the lofty branches above, ſeemed to her melancholy imagination to bear the ſounds of diſtant lamentation, and, in the pauſes of the guſt, ſhe ſtill fancied, ſhe heard the feeble and far off notes of diſtreſs. Attention

convinced her, that this was no more than fancy; but the increasing gloom, which seemed the sudden close of day, soon warned her to depart, and, with faltering steps, she again moved toward the cottage. Through the casement appeared the cheerful blaze of a wood fire, and Theresa, who had observed Emily approaching, was already at the door to receive her.

"It is a cold evening, madam," said she, "storms are coming on, and I thought you would like a fire. Do take this chair by the hearth."

Emily, thanking her for this consideration, sat down, and then, looking in her face, on which the wood fire threw a gleam, she was struck with its expression, and, unable to speak, sunk back in her chair with a countenance so full of woe, that Theresa instantly comprehended the occasion of it, but she remained silent. "Ah!" said Emily, at length, "it is unnecessary for me to ask the result of your inquiry, your silence, and that look, sufficiently explain it;—he is dead!"

"Alas! my dear young lady," replied Theresa, while tears filled her eyes, "this world is made up with trouble! the rich have their share as well as the poor! But we must all endeavour to bear what Heaven pleases."

"He is dead then!" interrupted Emily, "Valancourt is dead!"

"A-well-a-day! I fear he is," replied Theresa.

"You fear!" said Emily, "do you only fear?"

"Alas! yes, Madam, I fear he is! neither the steward, or any of the Epourville family, have heard of him since he left Languedoc, and the Count is in great affliction about him, for he says he was always punctual in writing, but that now he has not received a line from him, since he left Languedoc; he appointed to be at home, three weeks ago, but he has neither come, or written, and they fear some accident has befallen him. Alas! that ever I should live to cry for his death,! I am old, and might have died without being missed, but he"——Emily was faint, and asked for some water, and Theresa, alarmed by the voice, in which she spoke, hastened to her assistance, and, while she held the water to Emily's lips, continued, "My dear young mistress, do not take it so to heart; the Chevalier may be alive and well, for all this; let us hope the best!"

"O no! I cannot hope," said Emily, "I am acquainted with circumstances, that will not suffer me to hope. I am somewhat better now, and can hear what you have to say. Tell me, I entreat, the particulars of what you know."

"Stay till you are a little better, mademoiselle, you look sadly!"

"O no, Thereſa, tell me all, while I have the power to hear it," ſaid Emily, "tell me all, I conjure you!"

"Well, madam, I will then; but the ſteward did not ſay much, for Richard ſays he ſeemed ſhy of talking about Monſ. Valancourt, and what he gathered was from Gabriel, one of the ſervants, who ſaid he had heard it from my lord's gentleman."

"What did he hear?" ſaid Emily.

"Why, madam, Richard has but a bad memory, and could not remember half of it, and, if I had not aſked him a great many queſtions, I ſhould have heard little indeed. But he ſays that Gabriel ſaid, that he and all the other ſervants were in great trouble about M. Valancourt, for that he was ſuch a kind young gentleman, they all loved him, as well as if he had been their own brother—and now, to think what was become of him! For he uſed to be ſo courteous to them all, and, if any of them had been in fault, M. Valancourt was the firſt to perſuade my lord to forgive them. And then, if any poor family was in diſtreſs, M. Valancourt was the firſt, too, to relieve them, though ſome folks, not a great way off, could have afforded that much better than he. And then, ſaid Gabriel, he was ſo gentle to every body, and, for all he had ſuch a noble look with him, he never would command, and call about him, as ſome of your quality people do, and we never minded him the leſs for that. Nay, ſays Gabriel, for that matter, we minded him the more, and would all have run to obey him at a word, ſooner than if ſome folks had told us what to do at full length; aye, and were more afraid of diſpleaſing him, too, than of them that uſed rough words to us."

Emily, who no longer conſidered it to be dangerous to liſten to praiſe beſtowed on Valancourt, did not attempt to interrupt Thereſa, but ſat, attentive to her words, though almoſt overwhelmed with grief. "My Lord," continued Thereſa, "frets about M. Valancourt ſadly, and the more, becauſe, they ſay, he had been rather harſh againſt him lately. Gabriel ſays he had it from my Lord's valet, that M. Valancourt had *comported* himſelf wildly at Paris, and had ſpent a great deal of money, more a great deal than my lord liked, for he loves money better than M. Valancourt, who had been led aſtray ſadly. Nay, for that matter, M. Valancourt had been put into priſon at Paris, and my Lord, ſays Gabriel, refuſed to take him out, and ſaid he deſerved to ſuffer; and, when old Gregoire, the butler, heard of this, he actually bought a walking ſtick to take with him to Paris, to viſit his young maſter; but the next thing we hear is, that

M. Valancourt, is coming home. O, it was a joyful day when he came; but he was ſadly altered, and my Lord looked very cool upon him, and he was very ſad, indeed. And, ſoon after, he went away again into Languedoc, and, ſince that time, we have never ſeen him."

Thereſa pauſed, and Emily, ſighing deeply, remained with her eyes fixed upon the floor without ſpeaking. After a long pauſe, ſhe inquired what further Thereſa had heard. "Yet why ſhould I aſk?" ſhe added; "what you have already told is too much. O Valancourt! thou art gone—for ever gone! and I—I have murdered thee!" Theſe words, and the countenance of deſpair which accompanied them, alarmed Thereſa, who began to fear, that the ſhock of the intelligence Emily had juſt received, had affected her ſenſes. "My dear young lady, be compoſed," ſaid ſhe, "and do not ſay ſuch frightful words. You murder M. Valancourt,—dear heart!" Emily replied only by a heavy ſigh.

"Dear lady, it breaks my heart to ſee you look ſo," ſaid Thereſa, "do not ſit with your eyes upon the ground, and all ſo pale and melancholy; it frightens me to ſee you." Emily was ſtill ſilent, and did not appear to hear any thing that was ſaid to her. "Beſides, mademoiſelle," continued Thereſa, "M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet, for what we know."

At the mention of his name, Emily raiſed her eyes, and fixed them, in a wild gaze upon Thereſa, as if ſhe was endeavouring to underſtand what had been ſaid. "Aye, my dear lady," ſaid Thereſa, miſtaking the meaning of this conſiderate air, "M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet."

On the repetition of theſe words, Emily comprehended their import, but, inſtead of producing the effect intended, they ſeemed only to heighten her diſtreſs. She roſe haſtily from her chair, paced the little room, with quick ſteps, and, often ſighing deeply, claſped her hands, and ſhuddered.

Meanwhile, Thereſa, with ſimple, but honeſt affection, endeavoured to comfort her; put more wood on the fire, ſtirred it up into a brighter blaze, ſwept the hearth, ſet the chair, which Emily had left, in a warmer ſituation, and then drew forth from a cupboard a flaſk of wine. "It is a ſtormy night, madam," ſaid ſhe, "and blows cold—do come nearer the fire, and take a glaſs of this wine; it will comfort you, as it has done me, often and often, for it is not ſuch wine as one gets every day; it is rich Languedoc, and the laſt of ſix flaſks that M. Valancourt ſent me the night before he left Gaſcony for Paris. They have ſerved me ever ſince, as cordials, and I never drink it, but I think of

him, and what kind words he ſaid to me when he gave them. Thereſa, ſays he, you are not young now, and ſhould have a glaſs of good wine, now and then. I will ſend you a few flaſks, and, when you taſte them, you will ſometimes remember me your friend. Yes, thoſe were his very words—me your friend!" Emily ſtill paced the room, without ſeeming to hear what Thereſa ſaid, who continued ſpeaking. "And I have remembered him, often enough, poor young gentleman!—for he gave me this roof for a ſhelter, and that, which has ſupported me. Ah! he is in heaven, with my bleſſed maſter, if ever ſaint was!"

Thereſa's voice faltered; ſhe wept, and ſet down the flaſk, unable to pour out the wine. Her grief ſeemed to recall Emily from her own, who went towards her, but then ſtopped, and, having gazed on her, for a moment, turned ſuddenly away, as if overwhelmed by the reflection, that it was Valancourt, whom Thereſa lamented.

While ſhe yet paced the room, the ſtill, ſoft note of an oboe, or flute, was heard mingling with the blaſt, the ſweetneſs of which affected Emily's ſpirits; ſhe pauſed a moment in attention; the tender tones, as they ſwelled along the wind, till they were loſt again in the ruder guſt, came with a plaintiveneſs, that touched her heart, and ſhe melted into tears.

"Aye," ſaid Thereſa, drying her eyes, "there is Richard, our neighbour's ſon, playing on the oboe; it is ſad enough to hear ſuch ſweet muſic now." Emily continued to weep, without replying. "He often plays of an evening," added Thereſa, "and, ſometimes, the young folks dance to the ſound of his oboe. But, dear young lady! do not cry ſo; and pray take a glaſs of this wine," continued ſhe, pouring ſome into a glaſs, and handing it to Emily, who reluctantly took it.

"Taſte it for M. Valancourt's ſake," ſaid Thereſa, as Emily lifted the glaſs to her lips, "for he gave it to me, you know, madam." Emily's hand trembled, and ſhe ſpilt the wine as ſhe withdrew it from her lips. "For whoſe ſake!—who gave the wine?" ſaid ſhe in a faltering voice. "M. Valancourt, dear lady. I knew you would be pleaſed with it. It is the laſt flaſk I have left."

Emily ſet the wine upon the table, and burſt into tears, while Thereſa diſappointed and alarmed, tried to comfort her; but ſhe only waved her hand, entreated ſhe might be left alone, and wept the more.

A knock at the cottage door prevented Thereſa from immediately obeying her miſtreſs, and ſhe was going to open it, when

Emily, checking her, requeſted ſhe would not admit any perſon; but, afterwards, recollecting, that ſhe had ordered her ſervant to attend her home, ſhe ſaid it was only Philippe, and endeavoured to reſtrain her tears, while Thereſa opened the door.

A voice, that ſpoke without, drew Emily's attention. She liſtened, turned her eyes to the door, when, a perſon now appeared, and immediately a bright gleam, that flaſhed from the fire, diſcovered Valancourt!

Emily, on perceiving him, ſtarted from her chair, trembled, and, ſinking into it again, became inſenſible to all around her.

A ſcream from Thereſa now told, that ſhe knew Valancourt, whom her imperfect ſight, and the duſkineſs of the place had prevented her from immediately recollecting; but his attention was immediately called from her to the perſon, whom he ſaw, falling from a chair near the fire; and, haſtening to her aſſiſtance, he perceived he was ſupporting Emily! The various emotions, that ſeized him upon thus unexpectedly meeting with her, from whom he had believed he had parted for ever, and on beholding her pale and lifeleſs in his arms—may, perhaps, be imagined, though they could neither be then expreſſed, or now deſcribed, any more than Emily's ſenſations, when, at length, ſhe uncloſed her eyes, and, looking up, again ſaw Valancourt. The intenſe anxiety, with which he regarded her, was inſtantly changed to an expreſſion of mingled joy and tenderneſs, as his eye met hers, and he perceived, that ſhe was reviving. But he could only exclaim, "Emily!" as he ſilently watched her recovery, while ſhe averted her eye, and feebly attempted to withdraw her hand; but, in theſe the firſt moments which ſucceeded to the pangs his ſuppoſed death had occaſioned her, ſhe forgot every fault, which had formerly claimed indignation, and beholding Valancourt, ſuch as he appeared, when he won her early affection, ſhe experienced emotions of only tenderneſs and joy. This, alas! was but the ſunſhine of a few ſhort moments; recollections roſe, like clouds, upon her mind, and, darkening the illuſive image, that poſſeſſed it, ſhe again beheld Valancourt degraded—Valancourt unworthy of the eſteem and tenderneſs ſhe had once beſtowed upon him; her ſpirits faltered, and, withdrawing her hand, ſhe turned from him to conceal her grief, while he, yet more embarraſſed and agitated, remained ſilent.

A ſenſe of what ſhe owed to herſelf reſtrained her tears, and taught her ſoon to overcome, in ſome degree, the emotions of mingled joy, and ſorrow, that contended at her heart, as ſhe roſe, and, having thanked him for the aſſiſtance he had given her, bade

Thereſa good evening. As ſhe was leaving the cottage, Valancourt, who ſeemed ſuddenly awakened as from a dream, entreated, in a voice that pleaded powerfully for compaſſion, a few moments attention. Emily's heart perhaps, pleaded as powerfully, but ſhe had reſolution enough to reſiſt both, together with the clamorous entreaties of Thereſa, that ſhe would not venture home alone in the dark, and had already opened the cottage door, when the pelting ſtorm compelled her to obey their requeſts.

Silent and embarraſſed, ſhe returned to the fire, while Valancourt, with increaſing agitation, paced the room, as if he wiſhed, yet feared to ſpeak, and Thereſa expreſſed without reſtraint her joy and wonder upon ſeeing him.

"Dear heart! ſir," ſaid ſhe, "I never was ſo ſurpriſed and overjoyed in my life. We were in great tribulation before you came, for we thought you was dead, and were talking and lamenting about you, juſt when you knocked at the door. My young miſtreſs there was crying, fit to break her heart——"

Emily looked with much diſpleaſure at Thereſa, but, before ſhe could ſpeak, Valancourt, unable to repreſs the emotion, which Thereſa's imprudent diſcovery occaſioned, exclaimed, "O my Emily! am I then ſtill dear to you! Did you, indeed, honour me with a thought—a tear? O heavens! you weep—you weep now!"

"Thereſa, ſir," ſaid Emily, with a reſerved air, and trying to conquer her tears, "has reaſon to remember you with gratitude, and ſhe was concerned, becauſe ſhe had not lately heard of you. Allow me to thank you for the kindneſs you have ſhewn her, and to ſay, that, ſince I am now upon the ſpot, ſhe muſt not be further indebted to you."

"Emily!" ſaid Valancourt, no longer maſter of his emotions, "is it thus you meet him, whom once you meant to honour with your hand—thus you meet him, who has loved you—ſuffered for you?—Yet what do I ſay? Pardon me, pardon me, mademoiſelle St. Aubert, I know not what I utter. I have no longer any claim upon your remembrance—I have forfeited every pretenſion to your eſteem, your love. Yes! let me not forget that I once poſſeſſed your affections, though to know that I have loſt them, is my ſevereſt affliction. Affliction—do I call it!—that is a term of mildneſs."

"Dear heart!' ſaid Thereſa, preventing Emily from replying, "talk of once having her affections! Why, my dear young lady loves you now, better than ſhe does any body in the whole world, though ſhe pretends to deny it."

"This is insupportable!" said Emily; "Theresa, you know not what you say. Sir, if you respect my tranquillity, you will spare me from the continuance of this distress."

"I do respect your tranquillity too much, voluntarily to interrupt it," replied Valancourt, in whose bosom pride now contended with tenderness; "and will not be a voluntary intruder. I would have entreated a few moments attention—yet I know not for what purpose. You have ceased to esteem me, and to recount to you my sufferings will degrade me more, without exciting even your pity. Yet I have been, O Emily! I am indeed very wretched!" added Valancourt, in a voice, that softened from solemnity into grief.

"What! is my dear young master going out in all this rain!" said Theresa. "No, he shall not stir a step. Dear! dear! to see how gentlefolks can afford to throw away their happiness! Now, if you were poor people, there would be none of this. To talk of unworthiness, and not caring about one another, when I know there are not such a kind hearted lady and gentleman in the whole province, nor any that love one another half so well, if the truth was spoken!"

Emily, in extreme vexation, now rose from her chair, "I must be gone," said she, "the storm is over."

"Stay, Emily, stay, mademoiselle St. Aubert!" said Valancourt, summoning all his resolution, "I will no longer distress you by my presence. Forgive me, that I did not sooner obey you, and, if you can, sometimes, pity one, who, in losing you—has lost all hope of peace! May you be happy, Emily, however wretched I remain, happy as my fondest wish would have you!"

His voice faltered with the last words, and his countenance changed, while, with a look of ineffable tenderness and grief, he gazed upon her for an instant, and then quitted the cottage.

"Dear heart! dear heart!" cried Theresa, following him to the door, "why, Monsieur Valancourt! how it rains! what a night is this to turn him out in! why it will give him his death; and it was but now you was crying, mademoiselle, because he was dead. Well! young ladies do change their minds in a minute, as one may say!"

Emily made no reply, for she heard not what was said, while, lost in sorrow and thought, she remained in her chair by the fire, with her eyes fixed, and the image of Valancourt still before them.

"M. Valancourt is sadly altered! madam," said Theresa, "he looks so thin to what he used to do, and so melancholy, and then he wears his arm in a sling."

Emily raiſed her eyes at theſe words, for ſhe had not obſerved this laſt circumſtance, and ſhe now did not doubt, that Valancourt had received the ſhot of her gardener at Tholouſe; with this conviction her pity for him returning, ſhe blamed herſelf for having occaſioned him to leave the cottage, during the ſtorm.

Soon after her ſervants arrived with the carriage, and Emily, having cenſured Thereſa for her thoughtleſs converſation to Valancourt, and ſtrictly charging her never to repeat any hints of the ſame kind to him, withdrew to her home, thoughtful and diſconſolate.

Meanwhile, Valancourt had returned to a little inn of the village, whither he had arrived only a few moments before his viſit to Thereſa's cottage, on the way from Tholouſe to the chateau of the Count de Duvarney, where he had not been ſince he bade adieu to Emily at the Chateau-le-Blanc, in the neighbourhood of which he had lingered for a conſiderable time, unable to ſummon reſolution enough to quit a place, that contained the object moſt dear to his heart. There were times, indeed, when grief and deſpair urged him to appear again before Emily, and, regardleſs of his ruined circumſtances, to renew his ſuit. Pride, however, and the tenderneſs of his affection, which could not long endure the thought of involving her in his misfortunes, at length, ſo far triumphed over paſſion, that he relinquiſhed this deſperate deſign, and quitted Chateau-le-Blanc. But ſtill his fancy wandered among the ſcenes, which had witneſſed his early love, and, on his way to Gaſcony, he ſtopped at Tholouſe, where he remained when Emily arrived, concealing, yet indulging his melancholy in the gardens, where he had formerly paſſed with her ſo many happy hours; often recurring, with vain regret, to the evening before her departure for Italy, when ſhe had ſo unexpectedly met him on the terrace, and endeavouring to recall to his memory every word and look, which had then charmed him, the arguments he had employed to diſſuade her from the journey, and the tenderneſs of their laſt farewel.

In ſuch melancholy recollections he had been indulging, when Emily unexpectedly appeared to him on this very terrace, the evening after her arrival at Tholouſe. His emotions, on thus ſeeing her, can ſcarcely be imagined; but he ſo far overcame the firſt promptings of love, that he forbore to diſcover himſelf, and abruptly quitted the gardens. Still, however, the viſion he had ſeen haunted his mind; he became more wretched than before, and the only ſolace of his ſorrow was to return in the ſilence of the night; to follow the paths which he believed her ſteps had

preſſed, during the day; and, to watch round the habitation where ſhe repoſed. It was in one of theſe mournful wanderings, that he had received by the fire of the gardener, who miſtook him for a robber, a wound in his arm, which had detained him at Tholouſe till very lately, under the hands of a ſurgeon. There, regardleſs of himſelf and careleſs of his friends, whoſe late unkindneſs had urged him to believe, that they were indifferent as to his fate, he remained, without informing them of his ſituation; and now, being ſufficiently recovered to bear travelling, he had taken La Vallee in his way to Eſtuviere, the Count's reſidence, partly for the purpoſe of hearing of Emily, and of being again near her, and partly for that of inquiring into the ſituation of poor old Thereſa, who, he had reaſon to ſuppoſe, had been deprived of her ſtipend, ſmall as it was, and which inquiry had brought him to her cottage, when Emily happened to be there.

This unexpected interview, which had at once ſhewn him the tenderneſs of her love and the ſtrength of her reſolution, renewed all the acuteneſs of the deſpair, that had attended their former ſeparation, and which no effort of reaſon could teach him, in theſe moments, to ſubdue. Her image, her look, the tones of her voice, all dwelt on his fancy, as powerfully as they had lately appeared to his ſenſes, and baniſhed from his heart every emotion, except thoſe of love and deſpair.

Before the evening concluded, he returned to Thereſa's cottage, that he might hear her talk of Emily, and be in the place, were ſhe had ſo lately been. The joy, felt and expreſſed by that faithful ſervant, was quickly changed to ſorrow, when ſhe obſerved, at one moment, his wild and phrenſied look, and, at another, the dark melancholy that overhung him.

After he had liſtened, and for a conſiderable time, to all ſhe had to relate, concerning Emily, he gave Thereſa nearly all the money he had about him, though ſhe repeatedly refuſed it, declaring, that her miſtreſs had amply ſupplied her wants; and then, drawing a ring of value from his finger, he delivered it her with a ſolemn charge to preſent it to Emily, of whom he entreated, as a laſt favour, that ſhe would preſerve it for his ſake, and ſometimes, when ſhe looked upon it, remember the unhappy giver.

Thereſa wept as ſhe received the ring, but it was more from ſympathy than from any preſentiment of evil; and before ſhe could reply, Valancourt abruptly left the cottage. She followed him to the door, calling upon his name and entreating him to return; but ſhe received no anſwer, and ſaw him no more.

CHAP. LIII.

"Call up him that left half told
The ſtory of Cambuſcan bold."

MILTON.

ON the following morning, as Emily ſat in the parlour adjoining the library, reflecting on the ſcene of the preceding night, Annette ruſhed wildly into the room, and, without ſpeaking, ſunk breathleſs into a chair. It was ſometime before ſhe could anſwer the anxious inquiries of Emily, as to the occaſion of her emotion, but, at length, ſhe exclaimed, "I have ſeen his ghoſt, madam, I have ſeen his ghoſt!"

"Who do you mean?" ſaid Emily, with extreme impatience.

"It came in from the hall, madam," continued Annette, "as I was croſſing to the parlour."

"Who are you ſpeaking of?" repeated Emily, "who came in from the hall?"

"It was dreſſed juſt as I have ſeen him, often and often," added Annette. "Ah! who could have thought———"

Emily's patience was now exhauſted, and ſhe was reprimanding her for ſuch idle fancies, when a ſervant entered the room, and informed her, that a ſtranger without begged leave to ſpeak with her.

It immediately occurred to Emily, that this ſtranger was Valancourt, and ſhe told the ſervant to inform him, that ſhe was engaged, and could not ſee any perſon. The ſervant having delivered his meſſage, returned with one from the ſtranger, urging the firſt requeſt, and ſaying, that he had ſomething of conſequence to communicate; while Annette, who had hitherto ſat ſilent and amazed, now ſtarted up, and crying, "It is Ludovico!—it is Ludovico!" ran out of the room. Emily bade the ſervant follow her, and, if it really was Ludovico, to ſhew him into the parlour.

In a few minutes, Ludovico appeared, accompanied by Annette, who, as joy rendered her forgetful of all rules of decorum towards her miſtreſs, would not ſuffer any perſon to be heard for ſometime but herſelf. Emily expreſſed ſurpriſe and ſatisfaction, on ſeeing Ludovico in ſafety, and the firſt emotions increaſed, when he delivered letters from Count De Villefort and the Lady Blanche, informing her of their late adventure, and of their preſent ſituation at an inn among the Pyrenees, where they had

been detained by the illneſs of Monſ. St. Foix, and the indiſpoſition of Blanche, who added, that the Baron St. Foix was juſt arrived to attend his ſon to his chateau, where he would remain till the perfect recovery of his wounds, and then return to Languedoc, but that her father and herſelf purpoſed to be at La Vallee, on the following day. She added, that Emily's preſence would be expected at the approaching nuptials, and begged ſhe would be prepared to proceed, in a few days, to Chateau-le-Blanc. For an account of Ludovico's adventure, ſhe referred her to himſelf; and Emily, though much intereſted, concerning the means, by which he had diſappeared from the north apartments, had the forbearance to ſuſpend the gratification of her curioſity, till he had taken ſome refreſhment, and had converſed with Annette, whoſe joy, on ſeeing him in ſafety, could not have been more extravagant, had he ariſen from the grave.

Meanwhile, Emily peruſed again the letters of her friends, whoſe expreſſions of eſteem and kindneſs were very neceſſary conſolations to her heart, awakened as it was by the late interview to emotions of keener ſorrow and regret.

The invitation to Chateau le-Blanc was preſſed with ſo much kindneſs by the Count and his daughter, who ſtrengthened it by a meſſage from the Counteſs, and the occaſion of it was ſo important to her friend, that Emily could not refuſe to accept it, nor, though ſhe wiſhed to remain in the quiet ſhades of her native home, could ſhe avoid perceiving the impropriety of remaining there alone, ſince Valancourt was again in the neighbourhood. Sometimes, too, ſhe thought, that change of ſcenery and the ſociety of her friends might contribute, more than retirement, to reſtore her to tranquillity.

When Ludovico again appeared, ſhe deſired him to give a detail of his adventure in the north apartments, and to tell by what means he became a companion of the banditti, with whom the Count had found him.

He immediately obeyed, while Annette, who had not yet had leiſure to aſk him many queſtions, on the ſubject, prepared to liſten with a countenance of extreme curioſity, venturing to remind her lady of her incredulity, concerning ſpirits, in the caſtle of Udolpho, and of her own ſagacity in believing in them; while Emily, bluſhing at the conſciouſneſs of her late credulity, obſerved, that, if Ludovico's adventure could juſtify Annette's ſuperſtition, he had probably not been here to relate it.

Ludovico ſmiled at Annette, and bowed to Emily, and then began as follows:

"You may remember, madam, that, on the night, when I ſat up in the north chamber, my lord, the Count, and Monſ. Henri accompanied me thither, and that, while they remained there, nothing happened to excite any alarm. When they were gone I made a fire in the bed room, and, not being inclined to ſleep, I ſat down on the hearth with a book I had brought with me to divert my mind. I confeſs I did ſometimes look round the chamber, with ſomething like apprehenſion——"

"O very like it, I dare ſay," interrupted Annette, "and I dare ſay too, if the truth was known, you ſhook from head to foot."

"Not quite ſo bad as that," replied Ludovico, ſmiling, "but ſeveral times, as the wind whiſtled round the caſtle, and ſhook the old caſements, I did fancy I heard odd noiſes, and, once or twice, I got up and looked about me; but nothing was to be ſeen, except the grim figures in the tapeſtry, which ſeemed to frown upon me, as I looked at them. I had ſat thus for above an hour," continued Ludovico, "when again I thought I heard a noiſe, and glanced my eyes round the room, to diſcover what it came from, but, not perceiving any thing, I began to read again, and, when I had finiſhed the ſtory I was upon, I felt drowſy, and dropped aſleep. But preſently I was awakened by the noiſe I had heard before, and it ſeemed to come from that part of the chamber, where the bed ſtood; and then, whether it was the ſtory I had been reading that affected my ſpirits, or the ſtrange reports, that had been ſpread of theſe apartments, I don't know, but, when I looked towards the bed again, I fancied I ſaw a man's face within the duſky curtains."

At the mention of this, Emily trembled, and looked anxiouſly, remembering the ſpectacle ſhe had herſelf witneſſed there with Dorothee.

"I confeſs, madam, my heart did fail me, at that inſtant," continued Ludovico, "but a return of the noiſe drew my attention from the bed, and I then diſtinctly heard a ſound, like that of a key, turning in a lock, but what ſurpriſed me more was, that I ſaw no door where the ſound ſeemed to come from. In the next moment, however, the arras near the bed was ſlowly lifted, and a perſon appeared behind it, entering from a ſmall door in the wall. He ſtood for a moment as if half retreating, with his head bending under the arras which concealed the upper part of his face, except his eyes ſcowling beneath the tapeſtry as he held it; and then, while he raiſed it higher, I ſaw the face of another man behind, looking over his ſhoulder. I know not how it was,

but, though my ſword was upon the table before me, I had not the power juſt then to ſeize it, but ſat quite ſtill, watching them, with my eyes half ſhut as if I was aſleep. I ſuppoſe they thought me ſo, and were debating what they ſhould do, for I heard them whiſper, and they ſtood in the ſame poſture for the value of a minute, and then, I thought I perceived other faces in the duſkineſs beyond the door, and heard louder whiſpers."

"This door ſurpriſes me," ſaid Emily, "becauſe I underſtood, that the Count had cauſed the arras to be lifted, and the walls examined, ſuſpecting, that they might have concealed a paſſage through which you had departed."

"It does not appear ſo extraordinary to me, madam," replied Ludovico, "that this door ſhould eſcape notice, becauſe it was formed in a narrow compartment, which appeared to be part of the outward wall, and, if the Count had not paſſed over it, he might have thought it was uſeleſs to ſearch for a door where it ſeemed as if no paſſage could communicate with one; but the truth was, that the paſſage was formed within the wall itſelf.—But, to return to the men, whom I ſaw obſcurely beyond the door, and who did not ſuffer me to remain long in ſuſpenſe, concerning their deſign. They all ruſhed into the room, and ſurrounded me, though not before I had ſnatched up my ſword to defend myſelf. But what could one man do againſt four? They ſoon diſarmed me, and, having faſtened my arms, and gagged my mouth, forced me through the private door, leaving my ſword upon the table, to aſſiſt, as they ſaid, thoſe who ſhould come in the morning to look for me, in fighting againſt the ghoſts. They then led me through many narrow paſſages, cut, as I fancied, in the walls, for I had never ſeen them before, and down ſeveral flights of ſteps, till we came to the vaults underneath the caſtle; and then opening a ſtone door, which I ſhould have taken for the wall itſelf, we went through a long paſſage, and down other ſteps cut in the ſolid rock, when another door delivered us into a cave. After turning and twining about, for ſometime, we reached the mouth of it, and I found myſelf on the ſea beach at the foot of the cliffs, with the chateau above. A boat was in waiting, into which the ruffians got, forcing me along with them, and we ſoon reached a ſmall veſſel, that was at anchor, where other men appeared, when ſetting me aboard, two of the fellows who had ſeized me, followed, and the other two rowed back to the ſhore, while we ſet ſail. I ſoon found out what all this meant, and what was the buſineſs of theſe men at the chateau. We landed in Rouſillon, and, after lingering ſeveral

days about the ſhore, ſome of their comrades came down from the mountains, and carried me with them to the fort, where I remained till my Lord ſo unexpectedly arrived, for they had taken good care to prevent my running away, having blindfolded me, during the journey, and, if they had not done this, I think I never could have found my road to any town, through the wild country we traverſed. After I reached the fort I was watched like a priſoner, and never ſuffered to go out, without two or three companions, and I became ſo weary of life, that I often wiſhed to get rid of it."

"Well, but they let you talk," ſaid Annette, "they did not gagg you after they got you away from the chateau, ſo I don't ſee what reaſon there was to be ſo very weary of living; to ſay nothing about the chance you had of ſeeing me again."

Ludovico ſmiled, and Emily alſo, who inquired what was the motive of theſe men for carrying him off.

"I ſoon found out, madam," reſumed Ludovico, "that they were pirates, who had, during many years, ſecreted their ſpoil in the vaults of the caſtle, which, being ſo near the ſea, ſuited their purpoſe well. To prevent detection they had tried to have it believed that the chateau was haunted, and, having diſcovered the private way to the north apartments, which had been ſhut up ever ſince the death of the lady marchioneſs, they eaſily ſucceeded. The houſekeeper and her huſband, who were the only perſons, that had inhabited the caſtle, for ſome years, were ſo terrified by the ſtrange noiſes they heard in the nights, that they would live there no longer; a report ſoon went abroad, that it was haunted, and the whole country believed this the more readily, I ſuppoſe, becauſe it had been ſaid, that the lady marchioneſs had died in a ſtrange way, and becauſe my lord never would return to the place afterwards."

"But why," ſaid Emily, "were not theſe pirates contented with the cave—why did they think it neceſſary to depoſit their ſpoil in the caſtle?"

"The cave, madam," replied Ludovico, "was open to any body, and their treaſures would not long have remained undiſcovered there, but in the vaults they were ſecure ſo long as the report prevailed of their being haunted. Thus then, it appears, that they brought at midnight, the ſpoil they took on the ſeas, and kept it till they had opportunities of diſpoſing of it to advantage. The pirates were connected with Spaniſh ſmugglers and banditti, who live among the wilds of the Pyrenees, and carry on various kinds of traffic, ſuch as nobody would think of; and

with this deſperate horde of banditti I remained, till my lord arrived. I ſhall never forget what I felt, when I firſt diſcovered him—*I* almoſt gave him up for loſt! but I knew, that, if I ſhewed myſelf, the banditti would diſcover who he was, and probably murder us all, to prevent their ſecret in the chateau being detected. I, therefore, kept out of my lord's ſight, but had a ſtrict watch upon the ruffians, and determined, if they offered him or his family violence, to diſcover myſelf, and fight for our lives. Soon after, I overheard ſome of them laying a moſt diabolical plan for the murder and plunder of the whole party, when I contrived to ſpeak to ſome of my lord's attendants, telling them what was going forward, and we conſulted what was beſt to be done; meanwhile my lord, alarmed at the abſence of the Lady Blanche demanded her, and the ruffians having given ſome unſatisfactory anſwer, my lord and Monſ. St. Foix became furious, ſo then we thought it a good time to diſcover the plot, and ruſhing into the chamber, I called out, "Treachery! my Lord Count, defend yourſelf!" His lordſhip and the chevalier drew their ſwords directly, and a hard battle we had, but we conquered at laſt, as, madam, you are already informed of by my Lord Count."

"This is an extraordinary adventure," ſaid Emily, "and much praiſe is due, Ludovico, to your prudence and intrepidity. There are ſome circumſtances, however, concerning the north apartments, which ſtill perplex me; but, perhaps, you may be able to explain them. Did you ever hear the banditti relate any thing extraordinary of theſe rooms."

"No, madam," replied Ludovico, "I never heard them ſpeak about the rooms, except to laugh at the credulity of the old houſekeeper, who once was very near catching one of the pirates; it was ſince the Count arrived at the chateau, he ſaid, and he laughed heartily as he related the trick he had played off."

A bluſh overſpread Emily's cheek, and ſhe impatiently deſire Ludovico to explain himſelf.

"Why, my lady," ſaid he, "as this fellow was, one night in the bed room, he heard ſomebody approaching through the next apartment, and not having time to lift up the arras, and unfaſten the door, he hid himſelf in the bed juſt by. There he lay for ſometime in as great a fright, I ſuppoſe———"

"As you was in," interrupted Annette, "when you ſat up ſo boldly to watch by yourſelf."

"Aye," ſaid Ludovico, "in as great a fright as he ever made any body elſe ſuffer; and preſently the houſekeeper and ſome

other perſon came up to the bed, when he, thinking they were going to examine it, bethought him, that his only chance of eſcaping detection, was by terrifying them; ſo he lifted up the counterpane, but that did not do, till he raiſed his face above it, and then they both ſet off, he ſaid, as if they had ſeen the devil, and he got out of the rooms undiſcovered."

Emily could not forbear ſmiling at this explanation of the deception, which had given her ſo much ſuperſtitious terror, and was ſurpriſed, that ſhe could have ſuffered herſelf to be thus alarmed, till ſhe conſidered, that, when the mind has once begun to yield to the weakneſs of ſuperſtition, trifles impreſs it with the force of conviction. Still, however, ſhe remembered with awe, the myſterious muſic, which had been heard, at midnight, near Chateau-le-Blanc, and ſhe aſked Ludovico if he could give any explanation of it; but he could not.

"I only know, madam," he added, "that it did not belong to the pirates, for I have heard them laugh about it, and ſay, they believed the devil was in league with them there."

"Yes, I will anſwer for it he was," ſaid Annette, her countenance brightening. "I was ſure all along, that he or his ſpirits had ſomething to do with the north apartments, and now you ſee, madam, I am right at laſt."

"It cannot be denied, that his ſpirits were very buſy in that part of the chateau," replied Emily, ſmiling. "But I am ſurpriſed, Ludovico, that theſe pirates ſhould perſevere in their ſchemes, after the arrival of the Count; what could they expect but certain detection?"

"I have reaſon to believe, madam," replied Ludovico, "that it was their intention to perſevere no longer than was neceſſary for the removal of the ſtores, which were depoſited in the vaults; and it appeared, that they had been employed in doing ſo from within a ſhort period after the Count's arrival; but, as they had only a few hours in the night for this buſineſs, and were carrying on other ſchemes at the ſame time, the vaults were not above half emptied, when they took me away. They gloried exceedingly in this opportunity of confirming the ſuperſtitious reports, that had been ſpread of the north chambers, were careful to leave every thing there as they had found it, the better to promote the deception, and frequently, in their jocoſe moods, would laugh at the conſternation which they believed the inhabitants of the caſtle had ſuffered upon my diſappearing, and it was to prevent the poſſibility of my betraying their ſecret, that they had removed me to ſuch a diſtance. From that period they conſidered the

chateau as nearly their own; but I found from the diſcourſe of their comrades, that, though they were cautious, at firſt, in ſhewing their power there, they had once very nearly betrayed themſelves. Going, one night, as was their cuſtom, to the north chambers to repeat the noiſes, that had occaſioned ſuch alarm among the ſervants, they heard, as they were about to unfaſten the ſecret door, voices in the bed room. My lord has ſince told me, that himſelf and M. Henri were then in the apartment, and they heard very extraordinary ſounds of lamentation, which it ſeems were made by theſe fellows, with their uſual deſign of ſpreading terror, and my lord has owned, he then felt ſomewhat more than ſurpriſe; but, as it was neceſſary to the peace of his family, that no notice ſhould be taken, he was ſilent on the ſubject, and enjoined ſilence to his ſon."

Emily, recollecting the change, that had appeared in the ſpirits of the Count, after the night, when he had watched in the north room, now perceived the cauſe of it; and, having made ſome further inquiries upon this ſtrange affair, ſhe diſmiſſed Ludovico, and went to give orders for the accommodation of her friends on the following day.

In the evening, Thereſa, lame as ſhe was, came to deliver the ring, with which Valancourt had entruſted her, and, when ſhe preſented it, Emily was much affected, for ſhe remembered to have ſeen him wear it often in happier days. She was, however, much diſpleaſed, that Thereſa had received it, and poſitively refuſed to accept it herſelf, though to have done ſo would have afforded her a melancholy pleaſure. Thereſa entreated, expoſtulated, and then deſcribed the diſtreſs of Valancourt, when he had given the ring, and repeated the meſſage, with which he had commiſſioned her to deliver it; and Emily could not conceal the extreme ſorrow this recital occaſioned her, but wept, and remained loſt in thought.

"Alas! my dear young lady!" ſaid Thereſa, "why ſhould all this be? I have known you from your infancy, and it may well be ſuppoſed I love you, as if you was my own, and wiſh as much to ſee you happy. M. Valancourt, to be ſure, I have not known ſo long, but then I have reaſon to love him, as though he was my own ſon. I know how well you love one another, or why all this weeping and wailing?" Emily waved her hand for Thereſa to be ſilent, who, diſregarding the ſignal, continued, "And how much you are alike in your tempers and ways, and, that, if you were married, you would be the happieſt couple in the whole province—then what is there to prevent your marry-

ing? Dear dear! to ſee how ſome people fling away their happineſs, and then cry and lament about it, juſt as if it was not their own doing, and as if there was more pleaſure in wailing and weeping, than in being at peace. Learning, to be ſure, is a fine thing, but, if it teaches folks no better than that, why I had rather be without it; if it would teach them to be happier I would ſay ſomething to it, then it would be learning and wiſdom too."

Age and long ſervices had given Thereſa a privilege to talk, but Emily now endeavoured to check her loquacity, and, though ſhe felt the juſtneſs of ſome of her remarks, did not chooſe to explain the circumſtances that had determined her conduct towards Valancourt. She, therefore, only told Thereſa, that it would much diſpleaſe her to hear the ſubject renewed; that ſhe had reaſons for her conduct, which ſhe did not think it proper to mention, and that the ring muſt be returned, with an aſſurance, that ſhe could not accept it with propriety; and, at the ſame time, ſhe forbade Thereſa to repeat any future meſſage from Valancourt, as ſhe valued her eſteem and kindneſs. Thereſa was afflicted, and made another attempt, though feeble, to intereſt her for Valancourt, but the unuſual diſpleaſure, expreſſed in Emily's countenance, ſoon obliged her to deſiſt, and ſhe departed in wonder and lamentation.

To relieve her mind in ſome degree, from the painful recollections, that intruded upon it, Emily buſied herſelf in preparations for the journey into Languedoc, and, while Annette, who aſſiſted her, ſpoke with joy and affection of the ſafe return of Ludovico, ſhe was conſidering how ſhe might beſt promote their happineſs, and determined, if it appeared, that his affection was as unchanged as that of the ſimple and honeſt Annette, to give her a marriage portion, and ſettle them on ſome part of her eſtate. Theſe conſiderations led her to the remembrance of her father's paternal domain, which his affairs had formerly compelled him to diſpoſe of to M. Queſnel, and which ſhe frequently wiſhed to regain, becauſe St. Aubert had lamented, that the chief lands of his anceſtors had paſſed into another family, and becauſe they had been his birth-place and the haunt of his early years. To the eſtate at Tholouſe ſhe had no peculiar attachment, and it was her wiſh to diſpoſe of this, that ſhe might purchaſe her paternal domains, if M. Queſnel could be prevailed on to part with them, which, as he talked much of living in Italy, did not appear very improbable.

CHAP. LIV.

"Sweet is the breath of vernal ſhower,
The bees' collect treaſures ſweet,
Sweet muſic's melting fall, but ſweeter yet
The ſtill ſmall voice of gratitude."

GRAY.

ON the following day, the arrival of her friend revived the drooping Emily, and La Vallee became once more the ſcene of ſocial kindneſs and of elegant hoſpitality. Illneſs and the terror ſhe had ſuffered had ſtolen from Blanche much of her ſprightlineſs, but all her affectionate ſimplicity remained, and, though ſhe appeared leſs blooming, ſhe was not leſs engaging than before. The unfortunate adventure on the Pyrenees had made the Count very anxious to reach home, and, after little more than a week's ſtay at La Vallee, Emily prepared to ſet out with her friends for Languedoc, aſſigning the care of her houſe, during her abſence, to Thereſa. On the evening, preceding her departure, this old ſervant brought again the ring of Valancourt, and, with tears, entreated her miſtreſs to receive it, for that ſhe had neither ſeen or heard of M. Valancourt, ſince the night when he delivered it to her. As ſhe ſaid this, her countenance expreſſed more alarm, than ſhe dared to utter; but Emily, checking her own propenſity to fear, conſidered, that he had probably returned to the reſidence of his brother, and, again refuſing to accept the ring, bade Thereſa preſerve it, till ſhe ſaw him, which, with extreme reluctance, ſhe promiſed to do.

On the following day, Count De Villefort, with Emily and the Lady Blanche, left La Vallee, and, on the enſuing evening, arrived at the Chateau-le Blanc, where the Counteſs, Henri, and M. Du Pont, whom Emily was ſurpriſed to find there, received them with much joy and congratulation. She was concerned to obſerve, that the Count ſtill encouraged the hopes of his friend, whoſe countenance declared, that his affection had ſuffered no abatement from abſence, and was much diſtreſſed, when, on the ſecond evening after her arrival, the Count, having withdrawn her from the Lady Blanche, with whom ſhe was walking, renewed the ſubject of M. Du Pont's hopes. The mildneſs, with which ſhe liſtened to his interceſſions at firſt, deceiving him, as to her ſentiments, he began to believe, that, her affection for Valancourt being overcome, ſhe was, at length, diſpoſed to think favourably of M. Du Pont; and, when ſhe afterwards convinced

him of his miſtake, he ventured, in the earneſtneſs of his wiſh to promote what he conſidered to be the happineſs of two perſons, whom he ſo much eſteemed, gently to remonſtrate with her, on thus ſuffering an ill placed affection to poiſon the happineſs of her moſt valuable years.

Obſerving her ſilence and the deep dejection of her countenance, he concluded with ſaying, "I will not ſay more now, but I will ſtill believe, my dear Mademoiſelle St. Aubert, that you will not always reject a perſon, ſo truly eſtimable as my friend Du Pont."

He ſpared her the pain of replying, by leaving her; and ſhe ſtrolled on, ſomewhat diſpleaſed with the Count for having perſevered to plead for a ſuit, which ſhe had repeatedly rejected, and loſt amidſt the melancholy recollections, which this topic had revived, till ſhe had inſenſibly reached the borders of the woods, that ſcreened the monaſtery of St. Clair, when, perceiving how far ſhe had wandered, ſhe determined to extend her walk a little farther, and to inquire after the abbeſs and ſome of her friends among the nuns.

Though the evening was now drawing to a cloſe, ſhe accepted the invitation of the friar, who opened the gate, and, anxious to meet ſome of her old acquaintance, proceeded towards the convent parlour. As ſhe croſſed the lawn, that ſloped from the front of the monaſtery, towards the ſea, ſhe was ſtruck with the picture of repoſe, exhibited by ſome monks, ſitting in the cloiſters, which extended under the brow of the woods, that crowned this eminence; where, as they meditated, at this twilight hour, holy ſubjects, they ſometimes ſuffered their attention to be relieved by the ſcene before them, nor thought it profane to look at nature, now that it had exchanged the brilliant colours of day for the ſober hue of evening. Before the cloiſters, however, ſpread an ancient cheſnut, whoſe ample branches were deſigned to ſcreen the full magnificence of a ſcene, that might tempt the wiſh to worldly pleaſures; but ſtill, beneath the dark and ſpreading foliage, gleamed a wide extent of ocean, and many a paſſing ſail; while, to the right and left, thick woods were ſeen ſtretching along the winding ſhores. So much as this had been admitted, perhaps, to give to the ſecluded votary an image of the dangers and viciſſitudes of life, and to conſole him, now that he had renounced its pleaſures, by the certainty of having eſcaped its evils. As Emily walked penſively along, conſidering how much ſuffering ſhe might have eſcaped, had ſhe become a votareſs of the order, and remained in this retirement from the time of

her father's death, the veſper bell ſtruck up, and the monks retired ſlowly towards the chapel, while ſhe, purſuing her way, entered the great hall, where an unuſual ſilence ſeemed to reign. The parlour too, which opened from it, ſhe found vacant, but, as the evening bell was ſounding, ſhe believed the nuns had withdrawn into the chapel, and ſat down to reſt, for a moment, before ſhe returned to the chateau, where, however, the increaſing gloom made her now anxious to be.

Not many minutes had elapſed, before a nun, entering in haſte, inquired for the abbeſs, and was retiring, without recollecting Emily, when ſhe made herſelf known, and then learned, that a maſs was going to be performed for the ſoul of ſiſter Agnes, who had been declining for ſometime, and who was now believed to be dying.

Of her ſufferings the ſiſter gave a melancholy account, and of the horrors into which ſhe had frequently ſtarted, but which had now yielded to a dejection ſo gloomy, that neither the prayers, in which ſhe was joined by the ſiſterhood, or the aſſurances of her confeſſor, had power to recall her from it, or to cheer her mind even with a momentary gleam of comfort.

To this relation Emily liſtened with extreme concern, and, recollecting the phrenſied manners and the expreſſions of horror, which ſhe had herſelf witneſſed of Agnes, together with the hiſtory, that ſiſter Frances had communicated, her compaſſion was heightened to a very painful degree. As the evening was already far advanced, Emily did not now deſire to ſee her, or to join in the maſs, and, after leaving many kind remembrances with the nun, for her old friends, ſhe quitted the monaſtery, and returned over the cliffs toward the chateau, meditating upon what ſhe had juſt heard, till, at length, ſhe forced her mind upon leſs intereſting ſubjects.

The wind was high, and, as ſhe drew near the chateau, ſhe often pauſed to liſten to its awful ſound, as it ſwept over the billows, that beat below, or groaned along the ſurrounding woods; and, while ſhe reſted on a cliff at a ſhort diſtance from the chateau, and looked upon the the wide waters, ſeen dimly beneath the laſt ſhade of twilight, ſhe thought of the following addreſs,

TO THE WINDS.

Viewleſs, through heaven's vaſt vault your courſe ye ſteer,
Unknown from whence ye come, or whither go!
Myſterious pow'rs! I hear ye murmur low,
Till ſwells your loud guſt on my ſtartled ear,
And, awful! ſeems to ſay—ſome God is near!

I love to liſt your midnight voices float
In the dread ſtorm that o'er the ocean rolls,
And, while their charm the angry wave controuls,
Mix with its ſullen roar, and ſink remote.
Then, riſing in the pauſe, a ſweeter note,
The dirge of ſpirits, who your deeds bewail,
A ſweeter note oft ſwells while ſleeps the gale!
But ſoon, ye ſightleſs pow'rs! your reſt is o'er,
Solemn and ſlow, ye riſe upon the air,
Speak in the ſhrouds, and bid the ſea-boy fear,
And the faint warbled dirge—is heard no more!
Oh! then I deprecate your awful reign!
The loud lament yet bear not on your breath!
Bear not the craſh of bark far on the main,
Bear not the cry of men, who cry in vain,
The crew's dread chorus ſinking into death!
Oh! give not theſe, ye pow'rs! I aſk alone,
As rapt I climb theſe dark romantic ſteeps,
The elemental war, the billow's moan;
I aſk the ſtill, ſweet tear, that liſtening fancy weeps!

CHAP. LV.

———"Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will diſcharge their ſecrets,
More need ſhe the divine, than the phyſician."

MACBETH.

ON the following evening, the view of the convent towers, riſing among the ſhadowy woods, reminded Emily of the nun, whoſe condition had ſo much affected her; and, anxious to know how ſhe was, as well as to ſee ſome of her former friends, ſhe and the Lady Blanche extended their walk to the monaſtery. At the gate ſtood a carriage, which, from the heat of the horſes, appeared to have juſt arrived; but a more than common ſtillneſs pervaded the court and the cloiſters, through which Emily and Blanche paſſed in their way to the great hall, where a nun, who was croſſing to the ſtaircaſe, replied to the inquiries of the former, that ſiſter Agnes was ſtill living, and ſenſible, but that it was thought ſhe could not ſurvive the night. In the parlour, they found ſeveral of the boarders, who rejoiced to ſee Emily, and told her many little circumſtances that had happened in the convent ſince her departure, and which were intereſting to her only becauſe they related to perſons, whom ſhe had regarded with affection. While they thus converſed, the abbeſs entered the room, and expreſſed much ſatisfaction at ſeeing Emily, but her manner was unuſually ſolemn, and her countenance dejected.

"Our houſe," ſaid ſhe, after the firſt ſalutations were over, "is truly a houſe of mourning, a daughter is now paying the debt of nature. You have heard, perhaps that our daughter Agnes is dying?"

Emily expreſſed her ſincere concern.

"Her death preſents to us a great and awful leſſon," continued the abbeſs; "let us read it, and profit by it; let it teach us to prepare ourſelves for the change, that awaits us all! You are young, and have it yet in your power to ſecure "the peace that paſſeth all underſtanding"—the peace of conſcience. Preſerve it in your youth, that it may comfort you in age; for vain, alas! and imperfect are the good deeds of our latter years, if thoſe of our early life have been evil!"

Emily would have ſaid, that good deeds ſhe hoped, were never vain! but ſhe conſidered that it was the abbeſs who ſpoke, and ſhe remained ſilent.

"The latter days of Agnes," reſumed the abbeſs, "have been exemplary; would they might atone for the errors of her former ones! Her ſufferings now, alas! are great; let us believe, that they will make her peace hereafter! I have left her with her confeſſor, and a gentleman, whom ſhe has long been anxious to ſee, and who is juſt arrived from Paris. They, I hope, will be able to adminiſter the repoſe, which her mind has hitherto wanted."

Emily fervently joined in the wiſh.

"During her illneſs, ſhe has ſometimes named you," reſumed the abbeſs; "perhaps, it would comfort her to ſee you; when her preſent viſitors have left her, we will go to her chamber, if the ſcene will not be too melancholy for your ſpirits. But, indeed, to ſuch ſcenes, however painful, we ought to accuſtom ourſelves, for they are ſalutary to the ſoul, and prepare us for what we are ourſelves to ſuffer."

Emily became grave and thoughtful; for this converſation bro't to her recollection the dying moments of her beloved father, and ſhe wiſhed once more to weep over the ſpot, where his remains were buried. During the ſilence, which followed the abbeſs' ſpeech, many minute circumſtances attending his laſt hours occurred to her; his emotion on perceiving himſelf to be in the neighbourhood of Chateau-le-Blanc—his requeſt to be interred in a particular ſpot in the church of this monaſtery—and the ſolemn charge he had delivered her to deſtroy certain papers, without examining them. She recollected alſo the myſterious and horrible words in thoſe manuſcripts, upon which her eye had involuntarily glanced; and, though they now, and, indeed, whenever ſhe remembered them,

revived an exceſs of painful curioſity, concerning their full import, and the motives for her father's command, it was ever her chief conſolation, that ſhe had ſtrictly obeyed him in this particular.

Little more was ſaid by the abbeſs, who appeared too much affected by the ſubject ſhe had lately left, to be willing to converſe, and her companions had been for ſometime ſilent from the ſame cauſe, when this general reverie was interrupted by the entrance of a ſtranger, Monſieur Bonnac, who had juſt quitted the chamber of ſiſter Agnes. He appeared much diſturbed, but Emily fancied, that his countenance had more the expreſſion of horror, than of grief. Having drawn the abbeſs to a diſtant part of the room, he converſed with her for ſometime, during which ſhe ſeemed to liſten with earneſt attention, and he to ſpeak with caution, and a more than common degree of intereſt. When he had concluded, he bowed ſilently to the reſt of the company, and quitted the room. The abbeſs, ſoon after propoſed going to the chamber of ſiſter Agnes, to which Emily conſented, though not without ſome reluctance, and Lady Blanche remained with the boarders below.

At the door of the chamber they met the confeſſor, whom, as he lifted up his head on their approach, Emily obſerved to be the ſame that had attended her dying father; but he paſſed on without noticing her, and they entered the apartment, where, on a mattreſs, was laid ſiſter Agnes, with one nun watching in the chair beſide her. Her countenance was ſo much changed, that Emily would ſcarcely have recollected her, had ſhe not been prepared to do ſo: it was ghaſtly, and overſpread with gloomy horror; her dim and hollow eyes were fixed on a crucifix, which ſhe held upon her boſom: and ſhe was ſo much engaged in thought, as not to perceive the abbeſs and Emily, till they ſtood at the bed ſide. Then, turning her heavy eyes, ſhe fixed them in wild horror, upon Emily; and, ſcreaming, exclaimed, "Ah! that viſion comes upon me in my dying hours!"

Emily ſtarted back in terror, and looked for explanation to the abbeſs, who made her a ſignal not to be alarmed, and calmly ſaid to Agnes, "Daughter, I have brought Mademoiſelle St. Aubert to viſit you: I thought you would be glad to ſee her."

Agnes made no reply; but, ſtill gazing wildly upon Emily, exclaimed, "It is her very ſelf! Oh! there is all that faſcination in her look, which proved my deſtruction! What would you have—what is it you come to demand—Retribution?—— It will ſoon be yours—it is yours already. How many years have paſſed, ſince laſt I ſaw you! My crime is but as yeſterday. Yet I am grown old beneath it; while you are ſtill young and

blooming—blooming as when you forced me to commit that moſt abhorred deed! O! could I once forget it!—yet what would that avail?—the deed is done!"

Emily, extremely ſhocked, would now have left the room; but the abbeſs, taking her hand, tried to ſupport her ſpirits, and begged ſhe would ſtay a few moments, when Agnes would probably be calm, whom now ſhe tried to ſooth. But the latter ſeemed to diſregard her, while ſhe ſtill fixed her eyes on Emily, and added, "What are years of prayers and repentance? they cannot waſh out the foulneſs of murder!—Yes, murder! Where is he—where is he?—Look there—look there!—ſee where he ſtalks along the room! Why do you come to torment me now?" continued Agnes, while her ſtraining eyes were bent on air, "why was not I puniſhed before?—O! do not frown ſo ſternly! Hah! there again! 'tis ſhe herſelf! Why do you look ſo piteouſly upon me—and ſmile, too? ſmile on me! What groan was that?"

Agnes, ſunk down, apparently lifeleſs, and Emily, unable to ſupport herſelf, leaned againſt the bed, while the abbeſs and the attendant nun were applying the uſual remedies to Agnes. "Peace," ſaid the abbeſs, when Emily was going to ſpeak, "the delirium is going off, ſhe will ſoon revive. When was ſhe thus before, daughter?"

"Not for many weeks, madam," replied the nun, "but her ſpirits have been much agitated by the arrival of the gentleman ſhe wiſhed ſo much to ſee."

"Yes," obſerved the abbeſs, "that has undoubtedly occaſioned this paroxyſm of phrenzy. When ſhe is better, we will leave her to repoſe."

Emily very readily conſented, but, though ſhe could now give little aſſiſtance, ſhe was unwilling to quit the chamber, while any might be neceſſary.

When Agnes recovered her ſenſes, ſhe again fixed her eyes on Emily, but their wild expreſſion was gone, and a gloomy melancholy had ſucceeded. It was ſome moments before ſhe recovered ſufficient ſpirits to ſpeak; ſhe then ſaid feebly—"The likeneſs is wonderful!—ſurely it muſt be ſomething more than fancy. Tell me, I conjure you," ſhe added, addreſſing Emily, "though your name is St. Aubert, are you not the daughter of the Marchioneſs?"

"What Marchioneſs?" ſaid Emily, in extreme ſurpriſe; for, ſhe had imagined, from the calmneſs of Agnes' manner, that her intellects were reſtored. The abbeſs gave her a ſignificant glance, but ſhe repeated the queſtion.

"What Marchioness?" exclaimed Agnes, "I know but of one, the Marchioness de Villeroi."

Emily, remembering the emotion of her late father, upon the unexpected mention of this lady, and his request to be laid near the tomb of the Villerois, now felt greatly interested, and she entreated Agnes to explain the reason of her question. The abbess would now have withdrawn Emily from the room, who being, however, detained by a strong interest, repeated her intreaties.

"Bring me that casket, sister," said Agnes; "I will shew her to you; yet you need only look in that mirror, and you will behold her; you surely are her daughter; such striking resemblance is never found but among near relations."

The nun brought the casket, and Agnes, having directed her how to unlock it, she took thence a miniature, in which Emily perceived the exact resemblance of the picture, which she had found among her late father's papers. Agnes held out her hand to receive it; gazed upon it earnestly for some moments in silence; and then, with a countenance of deep despair, threw up her eyes to heaven, and prayed inwardly. When she had finished, she returned the miniature to Emily. "Keep it," said she "I bequeath it to you, for I must believe it is your right. I have frequently observed the resemblance between you; but never, till this day, did it strike upon my conscience so powerfully! Stay, sister, do not remove the casket—there is another picture I would shew."

Emily trembled with expectation, and the abbess again would have withdrawn her. "Agnes is still disordered," said she, "you observe how she wanders. In these moods she says any thing, and does not scruple, as you have witnessed, to accuse herself of the most horrible crimes."

Emily, however, thought she perceived something more than madness in the inconsistencies of Agnes, whose mention of the Marchioness, and production of her picture, had interested her so much, that she determined to obtain further information, if possible, respecting the subject of it.

The nun returned with the casket, and, Agnes pointing out to her a secret drawer, she took from it another miniature. "Here," said Agnes, as she offered it to Emily, "learn a lesson for your vanity, at least; look well at this picture, and see if you can discover any resemblance between what I was, and what I am."

Emily impatiently received the miniature, which her eyes had scarcely glanced upon, before her trembling hands had nearly suffered it to fall—it was the resemblance of the portrait of Signora Laurentini, which she had formerly seen in the castle of Udolpho,

the lady, who had diſappeared in ſo myſterious a manner, and whom Montoni had been ſuſpected of having cauſed to be murdered.

In ſilent aſtoniſhment, Emily continued to gaze alternately upon the picture and the dying nun, endeavouring to trace a reſemblance between them, which no longer exiſted.

"Why do you look ſo ſternly on me?" ſaid Agnes, miſtaking the nature of Emily's emotion.

"I have ſeen this face before," ſaid Emily, at length; "was it really your reſemblance?"

"You may well aſk that queſtion," replied the nun,—"but it was once eſteemed a ſtriking likeneſs of me. Look at me well, and ſee what guilt has made me. I then was innocent; the evil paſſions of my nature ſlept. Siſter!" added ſhe, ſolemnly, and ſtretching forth her cold, damp hand to Emily, who ſhuddered at its touch—"Siſter! beware of the firſt indulgence of the paſſions; beware of the firſt! Their courſe, if not checked then, is rapid—their force is uncontroulable—they lead us we know not whither, they lead us perhaps to the commiſſion of crimes, for which whole years of prayer and penitence cannot atone!—Such may be the force of even a ſingle paſſion, that it overcomes every other, and ſears up every other approach to the heart. Poſſeſſing us like a fiend, it leads us on to the acts of a fiend, making us inſenſible to pity and to conſcience. And, when its purpoſe is accompliſhed, like a fiend, it leaves us to the torture of thoſe feelings, which its power had ſuſpended—not annihilated,—to the tortures of compaſſion, remorſe, and conſcience. Then, we awaken as from a dream, and perceive a new world around us—we gaze in aſtoniſhment, and horror—but the deed is committed; not all the powers of heaven and earth united can undo it—and the ſpectres of conſcience will not fly! What are riches—grandeur—health itſelf, to the luxury of a pure conſcience, the health of the ſoul; and what the ſufferings of poverty, diſappointment, deſpair——to the anguiſh of an afflicted one! O! how long is it ſince I knew that luxury! I believed, that I had ſuffered the moſt agonizing pangs of human nature, in love, jealouſy and deſpair; but theſe pangs were eaſe, compared with the ſtings of conſcience, which I have ſince endured. I taſted too, what was called the ſweet of revenge, but it was tranſient, it expired even with the object, that provoked it. Remember, ſiſter, that the paſſions are the ſeeds of vices as well as of virtues, from which either may ſpring, accordingly as they are nurtured. Unhappy they who have never been taught the art to govern them!"

"Alas! unhappy!" ſaid the abbeſs, "and ill informed of our holy religion!" Emily liſtened to Agnes, in ſilent awe, while

ſhe ſtill examined the miniature, and became confirmed in her opinion of its ſtrong reſemblance to the portrait at Udolpho.—"This face is familiar to me," ſaid ſhe, wiſhing to lead the nun to an explanation, yet fearing to diſcover too abruptly her knowledge of Udolpho.

"You are miſtaken," replied Agnes, "you certainly never ſaw that picture before."

"No," replied Emily, "but I have ſeen one extremely like it." "Impoſſible," ſaid Agnes, who may now be called the Lady Laurentini.

"It was in the caſtle of Udolpho," continued Emily, looking ſtedfaſtly at her.

"Of Udolpho!" exclaimed Laurentini, "of Udolpho in Italy!" "The ſame" replied Emily.

"You know me then," ſaid Laurentini, "and you are the daughter of the Marchioneſs." Emily was ſomewhat ſurpriſed at this abrupt aſſertion. I am the daughter of the late Monſ. St. Aubert," ſaid ſhe; "and the lady you name is an utter ſtranger to me."

"At leaſt you believe ſo," rejoined Laurentini.

Emily aſked what reaſons there could be to believe otherwiſe.

"The family likeneſs, that you bear her," ſaid the nun. "The Marchioneſs, it is known, was attached to a gentleman of Gaſcony, at the time when ſhe accepted the hand of the Marquis, by the command of her father. Ill fated, unhappy woman!"

Emily remembering the extreme emotion which St. Aubert had betrayed on the mention of the Marchioneſs, would now have ſuffered ſomething more than ſurpriſe had her confidence in his integrity been leſs; as it was, ſhe could not, for a moment, believe what the words of Laurentini inſinuated; yet ſhe ſtill felt ſtrongly intereſted, concerning them, and begged, that ſhe would explain them further.

"Do not urge me on that ſubject," ſaid the nun, "it is to me a terrible one! Would that I could blot it from my memory!" She ſighed deeply, and, after the pauſe of a moment, aſked Emily, by what means ſhe had diſcovered her name?

"By your portrait in the caſtle of Udolpho, to which this miniature bears a ſtriking reſemblance," replied Emily.

"You have been at Udolpho then!" ſaid the nun, with great emotion. "Alas! what ſcenes does the mention of it revive in my fancy——ſcenes of happineſs, of ſufferings, and of horror!"

At this moment, the terrible ſpectacle, which Emily had witneſſed in a chamber of that caſtle, occurred to her, and ſhe ſhuddered, while ſhe looked upon the nun——and recollected her

late words——that "years of prayer and penitence could not wash out the foulneſs of murder." She was now compelled to attribute theſe to another cauſe, than that of delirium. With a degree of horror, that almoſt deprived her of ſenſe, ſhe now believed ſhe looked upon a murderer; all the recollected behaviour of Laurentini ſeemed to confirm the ſuppoſition yet Emily was ſtill loſt in a labyrinth of perplexities, and, not knowing how to aſk the queſtions, which might lead to truth, ſhe could only hint them in broken ſentences.

"Your ſudden departure from Udolpho"—ſaid ſhe.

Laurentini groaned.

"The reports that followed it," continued Emily—"The weſt chamber—the mourning veil—the object it conceals—when murders are committed——"

The nun ſhrieked, "What! there again!" ſaid ſhe, endeavouring to raiſe herſelf, while her ſtarting eyes ſeemed to follow ſome object round the room—"Come from the grave! What! Blood—blood too!—There was no blood—thou can'ſt not ſay it!—Nay, do not ſmile,—do not ſmile ſo piteouſly!"

Laurentini fell into convulſions, as ſhe uttered the laſt words; and Emily, unable any longer to endure the horror of the ſcene, hurried from the room, and ſent ſome nuns to the aſſiſtance of the abbeſs.

The Lady Blanche, and the boarders, who were in the parlour, now aſſembled round Emily, and, alarmed by her manner and affrighted countenance, aſked a hundred queſtions, which ſhe avoided anſwering further, than by ſaying, that ſhe believed ſiſter Agnes was dying. They received this as a ſufficient explanation of her terror, and had then leiſure to offer reſtoratives, which, at length, ſomewhat revived Emily, whoſe mind was, however, ſo much ſhocked with terrible ſurmiſes, and perplexed with doubts by ſome words from the nun, that ſhe was unable to converſe, and would have left the convent immediately, had ſhe not wiſhed to know whether Laurentini would ſurvive the late attack. After waiting ſometime, ſhe was informed, that, the convulſions having ceaſed, Laurentini ſeemed to be reviving, and Emily and Blanche were departing, when the abbeſs appeared, who, drawing the former aſide, ſaid ſhe had ſomething of conſequence to ſay to her, but, as it was late, ſhe would not detain her then, and requeſted to ſee her on the following day.

Emily promiſed to viſit her, and, having taken leave, returned with the Lady Blanche towards the chateau, on the way to which the deep gloom of the woods made Blanche lament, that the even-

ing was so far advanced; for the surrounding stillness and obscurity rendered her sensible of fear, though there was a servant to protect her; while Emily was too much engaged by the horrors of the scene she had just witnessed, to be affected by the solemnity of the shades, otherwise than as they served to promote her gloomy reverie, from which, however, she was at length recalled by the Lady Blanche, who pointed out, at some distance, in the dusky path they were winding, two persons slowly advancing. It was impossible to avoid them without striking into a still more secluded part of the wood, whither the strangers might easily follow; but all apprehension vanished, when Emily distinguished the voice of Monsr. Du Pont, and perceived, that his companion was the gentleman, whom she had seen at the monastery, and who was now conversing with so much earnestness as not immediately to perceive their approach. When Du Pont joined the ladies, the stranger took leave, and they proceeded to the chateau, where the Count, when he heard of Monsr. Bonnac, claimed him for an acquaintance, and, on learning the melancholy occasion of his visit to Languedoc, and that he was lodged at a small inn in the village, begged the favour of Monsr. Du Pont to invite him to the chateau.

The latter was happy to do so, and the scruples of reserve, which made M. Bonnac hesitate to accept the invitation, being at length overcome, they went to the chateau, where the kindness of the Count and the sprightliness of his son were exerted to dissipate the gloom that overhung the spirits of the stranger. M. Bonnac was an officer in the French service, and appeared to be about fifty; his figure was tall and commanding, his manners had received the last polish, and there was something in his countenance uncommonly interesting; for over features, which in youth, must have been remarkably handsome, was spread a melancholy, that seemed the effect of long misfortune, rather than of constitution or temper.

The conversation he held, during supper, was evidently an effort of politeness, and there were intervals in which, unable to struggle against the feelings, that depressed him, he relapsed into silence and abstraction, from which, however, the Count, sometimes withdrew him in a manner so delicate and benevolent, that Emily, while she observed him, almost fancied she beheld her late father.

The party separated at an early hour, and then, in the solitude of her apartment, the scenes, which Emily had lately witnessed, returned to her fancy, with dreadful energy. That in the dy-

ing nun ſhe ſhould have diſcovered Signora Laurentini, who, inſtead of having been murdered by Montoni, was, as it now ſeemed, herſelf guilty of ſome dreadful crime, excited both horror and ſurpriſe in a high degree: nor did the hints, which ſhe had dropped, reſpecting the marriage of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, and the inquiries ſhe had made concerning Emily's birth, occaſion her a leſs degree of intereſt, though it was of a different nature.

The hiſtory, which ſiſter Frances had formerly related, and had ſaid to be that of Agnes, it now appeared, was erroneous; but for what purpoſe it had been fabricated, unleſs the more effectually to conceal the true ſtory, Emily could not even gueſs. Above all, her intereſt was excited as to the relation, which the ſtory of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi bore to that of her father; for, that ſome kind of relation exiſted between them, the grief of St. Aubert, upon hearing her named, his requeſt to be buried near her, and her picture, which had been found among his papers, certainly proved. Sometimes it occurred to Emily, that he might have been the lover to whom it was ſaid the Marchioneſs was attached, when ſhe was compelled to marry the Marquis de Villeroi; but that he had afterwards cheriſhed a paſſion for her, ſhe could not ſuffer herſelf to believe, for a moment. The papers, which he had ſo ſolemnly enjoined her to deſtroy, ſhe now fancied had related to this connection, and ſhe wiſhed more earneſtly than before to know the reaſons, that made him conſider the injunction neceſſary, which, had her faith in his principles been leſs, would have led to believe, that there was a myſtery in her birth diſhonourable to her parents, which thoſe manuſcripts might have revealed.

Reflections, ſimilar to theſe, engaged her mind, during the the greater part of the night, and when, at length, ſhe fell into a ſlumber, it was only to behold a viſion of the dying nun, and to awaken in horrors, like thoſe ſhe had witneſſed.

On the following morning, ſhe was too much indiſpoſed to attend her appointment with the abbeſs, and, before the day concluded, ſhe heard, that ſiſter Agnes was no more. Monſ. Bonnac received this intelligence, with concern; but Emily obſerved, that he did not appear ſo much affected now, as on the preceding evening, immediately after quitting the apartment, of the nun, whoſe death was probably leſs terrible to him, than the confeſſion he had been then called upon to witneſs. However this might be, he was perhaps conſoled, in ſome degree, by a knowledge of the legacy bequeathed him, ſince his family was large, and the extravagance of ſome part of it had lately been the means of involving him in great diſtreſs, and even in the horrors, of a priſon;

and it was the grief he had ſuffered from the wild career of a favourite ſon, with the pecuniary anxieties and misfortunes conſequent upon it, that had given to his countenance the air of dejection which had ſo much intereſted Emily.

To his friend Monſ. Du Pont he recited ſome particulars of his late ſufferings, when it appeared, that he had been confined for ſeveral months in one of the priſons of Paris, with little hope of releaſe, and without the comfort of ſeeing his wife, who had been abſent in the country, endeavouring, though in vain, to procure aſſiſtance from his friends. When, at length, ſhe had obtained an order for admittance, ſhe was ſo much ſhocked at the change, which long confinement and ſorrow had made in his appearance, that ſhe was ſeized with fits, which, by their long continuance, threatened her life.

"Our ſituation affected thoſe, who happened to witneſs it," continued Monſ. Bonnac, "and one generous friend, who was in confinement at the ſame time, afterwards employed the firſt moments of his liberty in efforts to obtain mine. He ſucceeded; the heavy debt, that oppreſſed me, was diſcharged; and, when I would have expreſſed my ſenſe of the obligation I had received, my benefactor was fled from my ſearch. I have reaſon to believe he was the victim of his own generoſity, and that he returned to the ſtate of confinement, from which he had releaſed me; but every inquiry after him was unſucceſsful. Amiable and unfortunate Valancourt!"

"Valancourt!" exclaimed M. Du Pont. "Of what family?"

"The Valancourts, Counts Duvarney," replied Monſ. Bonnac.

The emotion of Monſ. Du Pont, when he diſcovered the generous benefactor of his friend to be the rival of his love, can only be imagined; but, having overcome his firſt ſurpriſe, he diſſipated the apprehenſions of Monſ. Bonnac by acquainting him, that Valancourt was at liberty, and had lately been in Languedoc; after which his affection for Emily, prompted him to make ſome inquiries, reſpecting the conduct of his rival, during his ſtay at Paris, of which M. Bonnac appeared to be well informed. The anſwers he received were ſuch as convinced him, that Valancourt had been much miſrepreſented, and, painful as was the ſacrifice, he formed the juſt deſign of relinquiſhing his purſuit of Emily to a lover, who, it now appeared, was not unworthy of the regard, with which ſhe honoured him.

The converſation of Monſ. Bonnac diſcovered, that Valancourt, ſometime after his arrival at Paris, had been drawn into the ſnares, which determined vice had ſpread for him, and that his hours had

been chiefly divided between the parties of the captivating Marchioneſs and thoſe gaming aſſemblies, to which the envy, or the avarice, of his brother officers had ſpared no art to ſeduce him. In theſe parties he had loſt large ſums, in efforts to recover ſmall ones, and to ſuch loſſes the Count de Villefort and Monſ. Henri had been frequent witneſſes. His reſources were, at length, exhauſted; and the Count, his brother, exaſperated by his conduct, refuſed to continue the ſupplies neceſſary to his preſent mode of life, when Valancourt, in conſequence of accumulated debts, was thrown into confinement, where his brother ſuffered him to remain, in the hope, that puniſhment might effect a reform of conduct, which had not yet been confirmed by long habit.

In the ſolitude of his priſon, Valancourt had leiſure for reflection, and cauſe for repentance; here, too, the image of Emily, which, amidſt the diſſipation of the city had been obſcured, but never obliterated from his heart, revived with all the charms of innocence and beauty, to reproach him for having ſacrificed his happineſs and debaſed his talents by purſuits, which his nobler faculties would formerly have taught him to conſider were as taſteleſs as they were degrading. But, though his paſſions had been ſeduced, his heart was not depraved, nor had habit riveted the chains, that hung heavily on his conſcience; and, as he retained that energy of will, which was neceſſary to burſt them, he, at length, emancipated himſelf from the bondage of vice, but not till after much effort and ſevere ſuffering.

Being releaſed by his brother from the priſon, where he had witneſſed the affecting meeting between Monſ. Bonnac and his wife, with whom he had been for ſometime acquainted, the firſt uſe of his liberty formed a ſtriking inſtance of his humanity and his raſhneſs; for with nearly all the money, juſt received from his brother, he went to a gaming houſe, and gave it as a laſt ſtake for the chance of reſtoring his friend to freedom, and to his afflicted family. The event was fortunate, and, while he had awaited the iſſue of this momentous ſtake, he made a ſolemn vow never again to yield to the deſtructive and faſcinating vice of gaming.

Having reſtored the venerable Monſ. Bonnac to his rejoicing family, he hurried from Paris to Eſtuviere; and, in the delight of having made the wretched happy, forgot, for a while, his own misfortunes. Soon, however, he remembered, that he had thrown away the fortune, without which he could never hope to marry Emily; and life, unleſs paſſed with her, now ſcarcely appeared ſupportable; for her goodneſs, refinement, and ſimplicity of heart, ren-

dered her beauty more enchanting, if poſſible, to his fancy, than it had ever yet appeared. Experience had taught him to underſtand the full value of the qualities, which he had before admired, but which the contraſted characters he had ſeen in the world made him now adore; and theſe reflections, increaſing the pangs of remorſe and regret, occaſioned the deep dejection, that had accompanied him even into the preſence of Emily, of whom he conſidered himſelf no longer worthy. To the ignominy of having received pecuniary obligations from the Marchioneſs Chamfort, or any other lady of intrigue, as the Count De Villefort had been informed, or of having been engaged in the depredating ſchemes of gameſters, Valancourt had never ſubmitted; and theſe were ſome of ſuch ſcandals as often mingle with truth, againſt the unfortunate. Count De Villefort had received them from authority, which he had no reaſon to doubt, and which the imprudent conduct he had himſelf witneſſed in Valancourt, had certainly induced him the more readily to believe. Being ſuch as Emily could not name to the Chevalier, he had no opportunity of refuting them; and, when he confeſſed himſelf to be unworthy of her eſteem, he little ſuſpected, that he was confirming to her the moſt dreadful calumnies. Thus the miſtake had been mutual, and had remained ſo, when Monſ. Bonnac explained the conduct of his generous, but imprudent young friend to Du Pont, who, with ſevere juſtice, determined not only to undeceive the Count on this ſubject, but to reſign all hope of Emily. Such a ſacrifice as his love rendered this, was deſerving of a noble reward, and Monſ. Bonnac, if it had been poſſible for him to forget the benevolent Valancourt, would have wiſhed that Emily might accept the juſt Du Pont.

When the Count was informed of the error he had committed, he was extremely ſhocked at the conſequence of his credulity, and the account which Monſ. Bonnac gave of his friend's ſituation, while at Paris, convinced him, that Valancourt had been entrapped by the ſchemes of a ſet of diſſipated young men, with whom his profeſſion had partly obliged him to aſſociate, rather than by an inclination to vice; and, charmed by the humanity, and noble, though raſh generoſity, which his conduct towards Monſ. Bonnac exhibited, he forgave him the tranſient errors, that had ſtained his youth, and reſtored him to the high degree of eſteem, with which he had regarded him, during their early acquaintance. But, as the leaſt reparation he could now make Valancourt was to afford him an opportunity of explaining to Emily his former conduct, he immediately wrote, to requeſt his

forgiveneſs of the unintentional injury he had done him, and to invite him to Chateau-le-Blanc. Motives of delicacy withheld the Count from informing Emily of this letter, and of kindneſs from acquainting her with the diſcovery reſpecting Valancourt, till his arrival ſhould ſave her from the poſſibility of anxiety, as to its event; and this precaution ſpared her even ſeverer inquietude, than the Count had foreſeen, ſince he was ignorant of the ſymptoms of deſpair, which Valancourt's late conduct had betrayed.

CHAP. LVI.

"——— But in theſe caſes,
We ſtill have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody inſtructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: thus even-handed juſtice
Commends the ingredients of our poiſon'd chalice
To our own lips."

MACBETH.

SOME circumſtances of an extraordinary nature now withdrew Emily from her own ſorrows, and excited emotions, which partook of both ſurpriſe and horror.

A few days following that, on which Signora Laurentini died, her will was opened at the monaſtery, in the preſence of the ſuperiors and Monſ. Bonnac, when it was found, that one third of her perſonal property was bequeathed to the neareſt ſurviving relative of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi, and that Emily was the perſon.

With the ſecret of Emily's family the abbeſs had long been acquainted, and it was in obſervance of the earneſt requeſt of St. Aubert, who was known to the friar, that attended him on his death bed, that his daughter had remained in ignorance of her relationſhip to the Marchioneſs. But ſome hints, which had fallen from Signora Laurentini, during her laſt interview with Emily, and a confeſſion of a very extraordinary nature, given in her dying hours, had made the abbeſs think it neceſſary to converſe with her young friend, on the topic ſhe had not before ventured to introduce; and it was for this purpoſe, that ſhe had requeſted to ſee her on the morning that followed her interview with the nun. Emily's indiſpoſition had then prevented the intended converſation; but now, after the will had been examined,

ſhe received a ſummons, which ſhe immediately obeyed, and became informed of circumſtances, that powerfully affected her. As the narrative of the abbeſs was, however, deficient in many particulars, of which the reader may wiſh to be informed, and the hiſtory of the nun is materially connected with the fate of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, we ſhall omit the converſation, that paſſed in the parlour of the convent, and mingle with our relation a brief hiſtory of

LAURENTINI DI UDOLPHO,

Who was the only child of her parents, and heireſs of the ancient houſe of Udolpho, in the territory of Venice. It was the firſt misfortune of her life, and that which led to all her ſucceeding miſery, that the friends who ought to have reſtrained her ſtrong paſſions, and mildly inſtructed her in the art of governing them, nurtured them by early indulgence. But they cheriſhed their own failings in her; for their conduct was not the reſult of rational kindneſs, and, when they either indulged, or oppoſed the paſſions of their child, they gratified their own. Thus they indulged her with weakneſs, and reprehended her with violence; her ſpirit was exaſperated by their vehemence, inſtead of being corrected by their wiſdom; and their oppoſitions became conteſts for victory, in which the due tenderneſs of the parents, and the affectionate duties of the child, were equally forgotten; but, as returning fondneſs diſarmed the parents' reſentment ſooneſt, Laurentini was ſuffered to believe that ſhe had conquered, and her paſſions became ſtronger by every effort, that had been employed to ſubdue them.

The death of her father and mother in the ſame year left her to her own diſcretion, under the dangerous circumſtances attendant on youth and beauty. She was fond of company, delighted with admiration, yet diſdainful of the opinion of the world, when it happened to contradict her inclinations; had a gay and brilliant wit, and was miſtreſs of all the arts of faſcination. Her conduct was ſuch as might have been expected, from the weakneſs of her principles and the ſtrength of her paſſions.

Among her numerous admirers was the late Marquis de Villeroi, who, on his tour through Italy, ſaw Laurentini at Venice, where ſhe uſually reſided, and became her paſſionate adorer. Equally captivated by the figure and accompliſhments of the Marquis, who was at that period one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed noblemen of the French court, ſhe had the art ſo effectually to

conceal from him the dangerous traits of her character and the blemiſhes of her late conduct, that he ſolicited her hand in marriage.

Before the nuptials were concluded, ſhe retired to the caſtle of Udolpho, whither the Marquis followed, and, where her conduct relaxing from the propriety, which ſhe had lately aſſumed, diſcovered to him the precipice, on which he ſtood. A minuter inquiry than he had before thought it neceſſary to make, convinced him, that he had been deceived in her character, and ſhe, whom he had deſigned for his wife, afterwards became his miſtreſs.

Having paſſed ſome weeks at Udolpho, he was called abruptly to France, whither he returned with extreme reluctance, for his heart was ſtill faſcinated by the arts of Laurentini, with whom, however, he had, on various pretences, delayed his marriage; but, to reconcile her to this ſeparation, he now gave repeated promiſes of returning to conclude the nuptials, as ſoon as the affair, which thus ſuddenly called him to France, ſhould permit.

Soothed, in ſome degree, by theſe aſſurances, ſhe ſuffered him to depart; and, ſoon after, her relative, Montoni, arriving at Udolpho, renewed the addreſſes, which ſhe had before refuſed, and which ſhe now again rejected. Meanwhile, her thoughts were conſtantly with the Marquis de Villeroi, for whom ſhe ſuffered all the delirium of Italian love, cheriſhed by the ſolitude, to which ſhe confined herſelf; for ſhe had now loſt all taſte for the pleaſures of ſociety and the gaiety of amuſement. Her only indulgences were to ſigh and weep over a miniature of the Marquis; to viſit the ſcenes, that had witneſſed their happineſs, to pour forth her heart to him in writing, and to count the weeks, the days, which muſt intervene before the period that he had mentioned as probable for his return. But this period paſſed without bringing him; and week after week followed in heavy and almoſt intolerable expectation. During this interval, Laurentini's fancy, occupied inceſſantly by one idea, became diſordered; and, her whole heart being devoted to one object, life became hateful to her, when ſhe believed that object loſt.

Several months paſſed, during which ſhe heard nothing from the Marquis de Villeroi, and her days were marked, at intervals, with the phrenſy of paſſion and the ſullenneſs of deſpair. She ſecluded herſelf from all viſitors, and, ſometimes, remained in her apartment, for weeks together, refuſing to ſpeak to every perſon, except her favourite female attendant, writing ſcraps of letters, reading, again and again, thoſe ſhe had received from the Marquis, weeping over his picture, and ſpeaking to it, for many hours, upbraiding, reproaching and careſſing it alternately.

At length, a report reached her, that the Marquis had married in France, and, after ſuffering all the extremes of love, jealouſy and indignation, ſhe formed the deſperate reſolution of going ſecretly to that country, and, if the report proved true, of attempting a deep revenge. To her favourite woman only ſhe confided the plan of her journey, and ſhe engaged her to partake of it. Having collected her jewels, which, deſcending to her from many branches of her family, were of immenſe value, and all her caſh, to a very large amount, they were packed in a trunk, which was privately conveyed to a neighbouring town, whither Laurentini, with this only ſervant, followed, and thence proceeded ſecretly to Leghorn, where they embarked for France.

When, on her arrival in Languedoc, ſhe found, that the Marquis de Villeroi had been married for ſome months, her deſpair almoſt deprived her of reaſon, and ſhe alternately projected and abandoned the horrible deſign of murdering the Marquis, his wife and herſelf. At length ſhe contrived to throw herſelf in his way, with an intention of reproaching him, for his conduct, and of ſtabbing herſelf in his preſence; but, when ſhe again ſaw him, who ſo long had been the conſtant object of her thoughts and affections, reſentment yielded to love; her reſolution failed; ſhe trembled with the conflict of emotions, that aſſailed her heart, and fainted away.

The Marquis was not proof againſt her beauty and ſenſibility; all the energy, with which he had firſt loved, returned, for his paſſion had been reſiſted by prudence, rather than overcome by indifference; and, ſince the honour of his family would not permit him to marry her, he had endeavoured to ſubdue his love, and had ſo far ſucceeded, as to ſelect the then Marchioneſs for his wife, whom he loved at firſt with a tempered and rational affection. But the mild virtues of that amiable lady did not recompenſe him for her indifference, which appeared, notwithſtanding her efforts to conceal it; and he had, for ſometime, ſuſpected that her affections were engaged by another perſon, when Laurentini arrived in Languedoc. This artful Italian ſoon perceived, that ſhe had regained her influence over him, and, ſoothed by the diſcovery, ſhe determined to live, and to employ all her enchantments to win his conſent to the diabolical deed, which ſhe believed was neceſſary to the ſecurity of her happineſs. She conducted her ſcheme with deep diſſimulation and patient perſeverance, and, having completely eſtranged the affections of the Marquis from his wife, whoſe gentle goodneſs and unimpaſſioned manners had ceaſed to pleaſe, when contraſted

with the captivations of the Italian, ſhe proceeded to awaken in his mind the jealouſy of pride, for it was no longer that of love, and even pointed out to him the perſon, to whom ſhe affirmed the Marchioneſs had ſacrificed her honour; but Laurentini had firſt extorted from him a ſolemn promiſe to forbear avenging himſelf upon his rival. This was an important part of her plan, for ſhe knew, that, if his deſire of vengeance was reſtrained towards one party, it would burn more fiercely towards the other, and he might then, perhaps, be prevailed on to aſſiſt in the horrible act, which would releaſe him from the only barrier, that withheld him from making her his wife.

The innocent Marchioneſs, meanwhile, obſerved, with extreme grief, the alteration in her huſband's manners. He became reſerved and thoughtful in her preſence; his conduct was auſtere, and ſometimes even rude; and he left her, for many hours together, to weep for his unkindneſs, and to form plans for the recovery of his affection. His conduct afflicted her the more, becauſe, in obedience to the command of her father, ſhe had accepted his hand, though her affections were engaged to another, whoſe amiable diſpoſition, ſhe had reaſon to believe, would have enſured her happineſs. This circumſtance Laurentini had diſcovered, ſoon after her arrival in France, and had made ample uſe of it in aſſiſting her deſigns upon the Marquis, to whom ſhe adduced ſuch ſeeming proof of his wife's infidelity, that, in the frantic rage of wounded honour, he conſented to deſtroy his wife. A ſlow poiſon was adminiſtered, and ſhe fell a victim to the jealouſy and ſubtlety of Laurentini and to the guilty weakneſs of her huſband.

But the moment of Laurentini's triumph, the moment, to which ſhe had looked forward for the completion of all her wiſhes, proved only the commencement of a ſuffering, that never left her to her dying hour.

The paſſion of revenge, which had in part ſtimulated her to the commiſſion of this atrocious deed, died, even at the moment when it was gratified, and left her to the horrors of unavailing pity and remorſe, which would probably have empoiſoned all the years ſhe had promiſed herſelf with the Marquis de Villeroi, had her expectations of an alliance with him been realized. But he, too, had found the moment of his revenge to be that of remorſe, as to himſelf, and deteſtation, as to the partner of his crime; the feeling, which he had miſtaken for conviction, was no more; and he ſtood aſtoniſhed, and aghaſt, that no proof remained of his wife's infidelity, now that ſhe had ſuffered the

puniſhment of guilt. Even when he was informed, that ſhe was dying, he had felt ſuddenly and unaccountably reaſſured of her innocence, nor was the ſolemn aſſurance ſhe made him in her laſt hour, capable of affording him a ſtronger conviction of her blameleſs conduct.

In the firſt horrors of remorſe and deſpair, he felt inclined to deliver up himſelf and the woman, who had plunged him into this abyſs of guilt, into the hands of juſtice; but, when the paroxyſm of his ſuffering was over, his intention changed. Laurentini, however, he ſaw only once afterwards, and that was, to curſe her as the inſtigator of his crime, and to ſay, that he ſpared her life only on condition, that ſhe paſſed the reſt of her days in prayer and penance. Overwhelmed with diſappointment, on receiving contempt and abhorrence from the man, for whoſe ſake ſhe had not ſcrupled to ſtain her conſcience with human blood, and, touched with horror of the unavailing crime ſhe had committed, ſhe renounced the world, and retired to the monaſtery of St. Claire, a dreadful victim to unreſiſted paſſion.

The Marquis, immediately after the death of his wife, quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, to which he never returned, and endeavoured to loſe the ſenſe of his crime amidſt the tumult of war, or the diſſipations of a capital; but his efforts were vain; a deep dejection hung over him ever after, for which his moſt intimate friends could not account, and he, at length, died, with a degree of horror nearly equal to that, which Laurentini had ſuffered. The phyſician, who had obſerved the ſingular appearance of the unfortunate Marchioneſs, after death, had been bribed to ſilence; and, as the ſurmiſes of a few of the ſervants had proceeded no further than a whiſper, the affair had never been inveſtigated. Whether this whiſper ever reached the father of the Marchioneſs, and, if it did, whether the difficulty of obtaining proof deterred him from proſecuting the Marquis de Villeroi, is uncertain; but her death was deeply lamented by ſome part of her family, and particularly by her brother, M. St. Aubert; for that was the degree of relationſhip, which had exiſted between Emily's father and the Marchioneſs; and there is no doubt, that he ſuſpected the manner of her death. Many letters paſſed between the Marquis and him, ſoon after the deceaſe of his beloved ſiſter, the ſubject of which was not known, but there is reaſon to believe, that they related to the cauſe of her death; and theſe were the papers, together with ſome letters of the Marchioneſs, who had confided to her brother the occaſion of her unhappineſs, which St. Aubert had ſo ſolemnly enjoined his daughter to deſtroy: and anxiety

for her peace had probably made him forbid her to inquire into the melancholy ſtory, to which they alluded. Such, indeed, had been his affliction, on the premature death of this his favourite ſiſter, whoſe unhappy marriage had from the firſt excited his tendereſt pity, that he never could hear her named, or mention her himſelf after her death, except to Madame St. Aubert. From Emily, whoſe ſenſibility he feared to awaken, he had ſo carefully concealed her hiſtory and name, that ſhe was ignorant, till now, that ſhe ever had ſuch a relative as the Marchioneſs de Villeroi; and from this motive he had enjoined ſilence to his only ſurviving ſiſter, Madame Cheron, who had ſcrupulouſly obſerved his requeſt.

It was over ſome of the laſt pathetic letters of the Marchioneſs, that St. Aubert was weeping, when he was obſerved by Emily, on the eve of her departure from La Vallee, and it was her picture which he had ſo tenderly careſſed. Her diſaſtrous death may account for the emotion he had betrayed, on hearing her named by La Voiſin, and for his requeſt to be interred near the monument of the Villerois, where her remains were depoſited, but not thoſe of her huſband, who was buried, where he died, in the north of France.

The confeſſor, who attended St. Aubert in his laſt moments, recollected him to be the brother of the late Marchioneſs, when St. Aubert, from tenderneſs to Emily, had conjured him to conceal the circumſtance, and to requeſt that the abbeſs, to whoſe care he particularly recommended her, would do the ſame; a requeſt, which had been exactly obſerved.

Laurentini, on her arrival in France, had carefully concealed her name and family, and, the better to diſguiſe her real hiſtory, had, on entering the convent, cauſed the ſtory to be circulated, which had impoſed on ſiſter Frances, and it is probable, that the abbeſs, who did not preſide in the convent, at the time of her noviciation, was alſo entirely ignorant of the truth. The deep remorſe, that ſeized on the mind of Laurentini, together with the ſufferings of diſappointed paſſion, for ſhe ſtill loved the Marquis, again unſettled her intellects, and, after the firſt paroxyſms of deſpair were paſſed, a heavy and ſilent melancholy had ſettled upon her ſpirits, which ſuffered few interruptions from fits of phrenſy, till the time of her death. During many years it had been her only amuſement to walk in the woods near the monaſtery, in the ſolitary hours of night, and to play on a favourite inſtrument, to which ſhe ſometimes joined the delightful melody of her voice, in the moſt ſolemn and melancholy airs of her native country, modulated by all the energetic feeling, that dwelt

in her heart. The phyſician, who had attended her, recommended it to the ſuperior to indulge her in this whim, as the only means of ſoothing her diſtempered fancy; and ſhe was ſuffered to walk in the lonely hours of night, attended by the ſervant, who had accompanied her from Italy; but, as the indulgence tranſgreſſed againſt the rules of the convent, it was kept as ſecret as poſſible; and thus the myſterious muſic of Laurentini had combined with other circumſtances, to produce a report, that not only the chateau, but its neighbourhood, was haunted.

Soon after her entrance into this holy community, and before ſhe had ſhewn any ſymptoms of inſanity there, ſhe made a will, in which, after bequeathing a conſiderable legacy to the convent, ſhe divided the remainder of her perſonal property, which her jewels made very valuable, between the wife of Monſ. Bonnac, who was an Italian lady and her relation, and the neareſt ſurviving relative of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi. As Emily St. Aubert was not only the neareſt, but the ſole relative, this legacy deſcended to her, and thus explained to her the whole myſtery of her father's conduct.

The reſemblance between Emily and her unfortunate aunt had frequently been obſerved by Laurentini, and had occaſioned the ſingular behaviour, which had formerly alarmed her; but it was in the nun's dying hour, when her conſcience gave her perpetually the idea of the Marchioneſs, that ſhe became more ſenſible, than ever, of this likeneſs, and, in her phrenſy, deemed it no reſemblance of the perſon ſhe had injured, but the original herſelf. The bold aſſertion, that had followed, on the recovery of her ſenſes, that Emily was the daughter of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, aroſe from a ſuſpicion that ſhe was ſo; for, knowing that her rival, when ſhe married the Marquis, was attached to another lover, ſhe had ſcarcely ſcrupled to believe, that her honour had been ſacrificed, like her own, to an unreſiſted paſſion.

Of a crime, however, to which Emily had ſuſpected, from her phrenſied confeſſion of murder, that ſhe had been inſtrumental in the caſtle of Udolpho, Laurentini was innocent; and ſhe had herſelf been deceived, concerning the ſpectacle, that formerly occaſioned her ſo much terror, and had ſince compelled her, for a while, to attribute the horrors of the nun to a conſciouſneſs of a murder committed in that caſtle.

It may be remembered, that, in a chamber of Udolpho, hung a black veil, whoſe ſingular ſituation had excited Emily's curioſity, and which afterwards diſcloſed an object, that had overwhelm-

ed her with horror; for, on lifting it, there appeared, inſtead of the picture ſhe had expected, within a receſs of the wall, a human figure of ghaſtly paleneſs ſtretched at its length, and dreſſed in the habiliments of the grave. What added to the horror of the ſpectacle, was, that the face appeared partly decayed and disfigured by worms, which were viſible on the features and hands. On ſuch an object, it will be readily believed, that no perſon could endure to look twice. Emily, it may be recollected, had, after the firſt glance, let the veil drop, and her terror had prevented her from ever after provoking a renewal of ſuch ſuffering, as ſhe had then experienced. Had ſhe dared to look again, her deluſion and her fears would have vaniſhed together, and ſhe would have perceived, that the figure before her was not human, but formed of wax. The hiſtory of it is ſomewhat extraordinary, though not without example in the records of that fierce ſeverity, which monkiſh ſuperſtition has ſometimes inflicted on mankind. A member of the houſe of Udolpho, having committed ſome offence againſt the prerogative of the church, had been condemned to the penance of contemplating, during certain hours of the day, a waxen image, made to reſemble a human body in the ſtate, to which it is reduced after death. This penance, ſerving as a memento of the condition at which he muſt himſelf arrive, had been deſigned to reprove the pride of the Marquis of Udolpho, which had formerly ſo much exaſperated that of the Romiſh church; and he had not only ſuperſtitiouſly obſerved this penance himſelf, which he had believed, was to obtain a pardon for all his ſins, but had made it a condition in his will, that his deſcendants ſhould preſerve the image, on pain of forfeiting to the church a certain part of his domain, that they alſo might profit by the humiliating moral it conveyed. The figure therefore, had been ſuffered to retain its ſtation in the wall of the chamber, but his deſcendants excuſed themſelves from obſerving the penance, to which he had been enjoined.

This image was ſo horribly natural, that it is not ſurpriſing Emily ſhould have miſtaken it for the object it reſembled, nor, ſince ſhe had heard ſuch an extraordinary account, concerning the diſappearing of the late lady of the caſtle, and had ſuch experience of the character of Montoni, that ſhe ſhould have believed this to be the murdered body of the lady Laurentini, and that he had been the contriver of her death.

The ſituation, in which ſhe had diſcovered it, occaſioned her, at firſt, much ſurpriſe and perplexity; but the vigilance, with

which the doors of the chamber, where it was depoſited, were afterwards ſecured, had compelled her to believe, that Montoni, not daring to confide the ſecret of her death to any perſon, had ſuffered her remains to decay in this obſcure chamber. The ceremony of the veil, however, and the circumſtance of the doors having been left open, even for a moment, had occaſioned her much wonder and ſome doubts; but theſe were not ſufficient to overcome her ſuſpicion of Montoni; and it was the dread of his terrible, vengeance, that had ſealed her lips in ſilence, concerning what ſhe had ſeen in the weſt chamber.

Emily, in diſcovering the Marchioneſs de Villeroi to have been the ſiſter of Monſ. St. Aubert, was variouſly affected; but, amidſt the ſorrow, which ſhe ſuffered for her untimely death, ſhe was releaſed from an anxious and painful conjecture, occaſioned by the raſh aſſertion of Signora Laurentini, concerning her birth and the honour of her parents. Her faith in St. Aubert's principles would ſcarcely allow her to ſuſpect that he had acted diſhonourably, and ſhe felt ſuch reluctance to believe herſelf the daughter of any other, than her, whom ſhe had always conſidered and loved as a mother, that ſhe would hardly admit ſuch a circumſtance to be poſſible; yet the likeneſs, which it had frequently been affirmed ſhe bore to the late Marchioneſs, the former behaviour of Dorothee the old houſekeeper, the aſſertion of Laurentini, and the myſterious attachment, which St. Aubert had diſcovered, awakened doubts, as to his connection with the Marchioneſs, which her reaſon could neither vanquiſh, or confirm. From theſe, however, ſhe was now relieved, and all the circumſtances of her father's conduct were fully explained; but her heart was oppreſſed by the melancholy cataſtrophe of her amiable relative, and by the awful leſſon, which the hiſtory of the nun exhibited, the indulgence of whoſe paſſions had been the means of leading her gradually to the commiſſion of a crime, from the prophecy of which in her early years ſhe would have recoiled in horror, and exclaimed—that it could not be!—a crime, which whole years of repentance and of the ſevereſt penance had not been able to obliterate from her conſcience.

CHAP. LVII.

——— ——— ——— "Then freſh tears
Stood on her cheek, as doth the honey-dew
Upon a gather'd lily almoſt wither'd."

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER the late diſcoveries, Emily was diſtinguiſhed at the chateau by the Count and his family, as a relative of the houſe of Villeroi, and received, if poſſible, more friendly attention, than had yet been ſhewn her.

Count De Villefort's ſurpriſe at the delay of an anſwer to his letter which had been directed to Valancourt, at Eſtuviere, was mingled with ſatisfaction for the prudence, which had ſaved Emily from a ſhare of the anxiety he now ſuffered, though, when he ſaw her ſtill drooping under the effect of his former error, all his reſolution was neceſſary to reſtrain him from relating the truth, that would afford her a momentary relief. The approaching nuptials of the Lady Blanche now divided his attention with this ſubject of his anxiety, for the inhabitants of the chateau were already buſied in preparations for that event, and the arrival of Monſ. St. Foix, was daily expected. In the gaiety, which ſurrounded her, Emily vainly tried to participate, her ſpirits being depreſſed by the late diſcoveries, and by the anxiety concerning the fate of Valancourt, that had been occaſioned by the deſcription of his manner, when he had delivered the ring. She ſeemed to perceive in it the gloomy wildneſs of deſpair; and, when ſhe conſidered to what that deſpair might have urged him, her heart ſunk with terror and grief. The ſtate of ſuſpenſe, as to his ſafety, to which ſhe believed herſelf condemned, till ſhe ſhould return to La Vallee, appeared inſupportable, and, in ſuch moments, ſhe could not even ſtruggle to aſſume the compoſure, that had left her mind, but would often abruptly quit the company ſhe was with, and endeavour to ſooth her ſpirits in the deep ſolitude of the woods, that overbrowed the ſhore. Here, the faint roar of foaming waves, that beat below, and the ſullen murmur of the wind among the branches around, were circumſtances in uniſon with the temper of her mind; and ſhe would ſit on a cliff, or on the broken ſteps of her favourite watch tower, obſerving the changing colours of the evening clouds, and the gloom of twilight draw over the ſea, till the white tops of billows, riding towards the ſhore, could ſcarcely be diſcerned amidſt the darkened waters. The lines, engraved by Valancourt on this tower, ſhe frequently repeated with melancholy enthuſiaſm, and then would endeavour to check the recol-

lections and the grief they occaſioned, and to turn her thoughts to indifferent ſubjects.

One evening, having wandered with her lute to this her favourite ſpot, ſhe entered the ruined tower, and aſcended a winding ſtaircaſe, that led to a ſmall chamber, which was leſs decayed than the reſt of the building, and whence ſhe had often gazed, with admiration, on the wide proſpect of ſea and land, that extended below. The ſun was now ſetting on that tract of the Pyrenees, which divides Languedoc from Rouſſillon, and, placing herſelf oppoſite to a ſmall grated window, which, like the wood tops beneath, and the waves lower ſtill, gleamed with the red glow of the weſt, ſhe touched the chords of her lute in ſolemn ſymphony, and then accompanied it with her voice, in one of the ſimple and affecting airs, to which, in happier days, Valancourt had often liſtened in rapture, and which ſhe now adapted to the following lines.

TO MELANCHOLY.

Spirit of love and ſorrow—hail!
Thy ſolemn voice from far I hear,
Mingling with ev'ning's dying gale:
Hail, with this ſadly-pleaſing tear!

O! at this ſtill, this lonely hour,
Thine own ſweet hour of cloſing day,
Awake thy lute, whoſe charmful pow'r
Shall call up fancy to obey:

To paint the wild romantic dream,
That meets the poet's muſing eye,
As, on the bank of ſhadowy ſtream,
He breaths to her the fervid ſigh.

O lonely ſpirit! let thy ſong
Lead me through all thy ſacred haunt;
The minſter's moonlight aiſles along,
Where ſpectres raiſe the midnight chaunt.

I hear their dirges faintly ſwell!
Then, ſink at once in ſilence drear,
While, from the pillar'd cloiſter's cell,
Dimly their gliding forms appear!

Lead where the pine-woods wave on high,
Whoſe pathleſs ſod is darkly ſeen,
As the cold moon, with trembling eye,
Darts her long beams the leaves between.

Lead to the mountain's duſky head,
Where, far below, in ſhade profound,
Wide foreſts, plains and hamlets ſpread
And ſad the chimes of veſper ſound.

Or guide me, where the daſhing oar
Juſt breaks the ſtillneſs of the vale,
As ſlow it tracks the winding ſhore,
To meet the ocean's diſtant ſail:

To pebbly banks, that Neptune laves,
With meaſur'd ſurges, loud and deep,
Where the dark cliff bends o'er the waves,
And wild the winds of autumn ſweep.

There pauſe at midnight's ſpectred hour,
And liſt the long-reſounding gale;
And catch the fleeting moonlight's pow'r
O'er foaming ſeas and diſtant ſail.

The ſoft tranquillity of the ſcene below, where the evening breeze ſcarcely curled the water, or ſwelled the paſſing ſail, that caught the laſt gleam of the ſun, and where, now and then, a dipping oar was all that diſturbed the trembling radiance, conſpired with the tender melody of her lute to lull her mind into a ſtate of gentle ſadneſs, and ſhe ſung the mournful ſongs of paſt times, till the remembrances they awakened were too powerful for her heart, her tears fell upon the lute, over which ſhe drooped, and her voice trembled, and was unable to proceed.

Though the ſun had now ſunk behind the mountains, and even his reflected light was fading from their higheſt points, Emily did not leave the watch tower, but continued to indulge her melancholy reverie, till a footſtep, at a little diſtance, ſtartled her, and, on looking through the grate, ſhe obſerved a perſon walking below, whom, however, ſoon perceiving to be Monſ. Bonnac, ſhe returned to the quiet thoughtfulneſs his ſtep had interrupted. After ſometime, ſhe again ſtruck her lute, and ſung her favourite air; but again a ſtep diſturbed her, and, as ſhe pauſed to liſten, ſhe heard it aſcending the ſtaircaſe of the tower. The gloom of the hour, perhaps, made her ſenſible to ſome degree of fear, which ſhe might not otherwiſe have felt; for, only a few minutes before, ſhe had ſeen Monſ. Bonnac paſs. The ſteps were quick and bounding, and, in the next moment, the door of the chamber opened, and a perſon entered, whoſe features were veiled in the obſcurity of twilight; but his voice could not be concealed, for it was the voice of Valancourt!

At the ſound, never heard by Emily without emotion, ſhe ſtarted, in terror, aſtoniſhment and doubtful pleaſure, and had ſcarcely beheld him at her feet, when ſhe ſunk into a ſeat, overcome by the various emotions, that contended at her heart, and almoſt inſenſible to that voice, whoſe earneſt and trembling calls ſeemed as if endeavouring to ſave her. Valancourt, as he hung over Emily, deplored his own raſh impatience, in having thus

ſurpriſed: her for when he had arrived at the chateau, too anxious to await the return of the Count, who, he underſtood, was in the grounds, he went himſelf to ſeek him, when, as he paſſed the tower, he was ſtruck by the ſound of Emily's voice, and immediately aſcended.

It was a conſiderable time before ſhe revived, but, when her recollection returned, ſhe repulſed his attentions, with an air of reſerve, and inquired, with as much diſpleaſure as it was poſſible ſhe could feel in theſe firſt moments of his appearance, the occaſion of his viſit.

"Ah Emily!" ſaid Valancourt, "that air, thoſe words—alas! I have, then, little to hope—when you ceaſed to eſteem me, you ceaſed alſo to love me!"

"Moſt true, ſir," replied Emily, endeavouring to command her trembling voice; "and if you had valued my eſteem, you would not have given me this new occaſion for uneaſineſs."

Valancourt's countenance changed ſuddenly from the anxieties of doubt to an expreſſion of ſurpriſe and diſmay: he was ſilent a moment, and then ſaid, "I had been taught to hope for a very different reception! Is it, then, true, Emily, that I have loſt your regard, for ever? am I to believe, that, though your eſteem for me may return—your affection never can? Can the Count have meditated the cruelty, which now tortures me with a ſecond death?"

The voice in which he ſpoke this, alarmed Emily as much as his words ſurpriſed her, and, with trembling impatience, ſhe begged that he would explain them.

"Can any explanation be neceſſary?" ſaid Valancourt, "do you not know how cruelly my conduct has been miſrepreſented? that the actions of which you once believed me guilty (and, O Emily! how could you ſo degrade me in your opinion, even for a moment!) theſe actions—I hold in as much contempt and abhorrence as yourſelf? Are you, indeed, ignorant, that Count De Villefort has detected the ſlanders, that have robbed me of all I hold dear on earth, and has invited me hither to juſtify to you my former conduct? It is ſurely impoſſible you can be uninformed of theſe circumſtances, and I am again torturing myſelf with a falſe hope!"

The ſilence of Emily confirmed this ſuppoſition; for the deep twilight would not allow Valancourt to diſtinguiſh the aſtoniſhment and doubting joy, that fixed her features. For a moment, ſhe continued unable to ſpeak; then a profound ſigh ſeemed to give ſome relief to her ſpirits, and ſhe ſaid,

"Valancourt! I was, till this moment, ignorant of all the circumſtances you have mentioned; the emotion I now ſuffer may aſſure you of the truth of this, and, that, though I had ceaſed to eſteem, I had not taught myſelf entirely to forget you."

"This moment," ſaid Valancourt, in a low voice, and leaning for ſupport againſt the window—"this moment brings with it a conviction that overpowers me! I am dear to you then—ſtill dear to you, my Emily!"

"Is it neceſſary that I ſhould tell you ſo?" ſhe replied, "is it neceſſary that I ſhould ſay—theſe are the firſt moments of joy I have known ſince your departure, and that they repay me for all thoſe of pain I have ſuffered in the interval?"

Valancourt ſighed deeply, and was unable to reply; but, as he preſſed her hand to his lips, the tears, that fell over it ſpoke a language, which could not be miſtaken, and to which words were inadequate.

Emily, ſomewhat tranquillized, propoſed returning to the chateau, and then, for the firſt time, recollected that the Count had invited Valancourt thither to explain his conduct, and that no explanation had yet been given. But, while ſhe acknowledged this, her heart would not allow her to dwell, for a moment, on the poſſibility of his unworthineſs; his look, his voice, his manner, all ſpoke the noble ſincerity, which had formerly diſtinguiſhed him; and ſhe again permitted herſelf to indulge the emotions of a joy, more ſurpriſing and powerful, than ſhe had ever before experienced.

Neither Emily, or Valancourt, were conſcious how they reached the chateau, whither they might have been transferred by the ſpell of a fairy, for any thing they could remember; and it was not, till they had reached the great hall, that either of them recollected there were other perſons in the world beſides themſelves. The Count then came forth with ſurpriſe, and with the joyfulneſs of pure benevolence, to welcome Valancourt, and to entreat his forgiveneſs of the injuſtice he had done him; ſoon after which, Monſ. Bonnac joined this happy group, in which he and Valancourt were mutually rejoiced to meet.

When the firſt congratulations were over, and the general joy became ſomewhat more tranquil, the Count withdrew with Valancourt to the library, where a long converſation paſſed between them, in which the latter ſo clearly juſtified himſelf of the criminal parts of the conduct, imputed to him, and ſo candidly confeſſed and ſo feelingly lamented the follies, which he had committed, that the Count was confirmed in the belief of all he had hoped; and, while he perceived ſo many noble virtues in Valan-

court, and that experience had taught him to deteſt the follies, which before he had only not admired, he did not ſcruple to believe, that he would paſs through life with the dignity of a wiſe and good man, or to entruſt to his care the future happineſs of Emily St Aubert, for whom he felt the ſolicitude of a parent. Of this he ſoon informed her in a ſhort converſation, when Valancourt had left him. While Emily liſtened to a relation of the ſervices, that Valancourt had rendered Monſ. Bonnac, her eyes overflowed with tears of pleaſure, and the further converſation of Count De Villefort perfectly diſſipated every doubt, as to the paſt and future conduct of him, to whom ſhe now reſtored, without fear, the eſteem and affection, with which ſhe had formerly received him.

When they returned to the ſupper room, the Counteſs and Lady Blanche met Valancourt with ſincere congratulations; and Blanche, indeed, was ſo much rejoiced to ſee Emily returned to happineſs, as to forget for a while, that Monſ. St. Foix was not yet arrived at the chateau, though he had been expected for ſome hours; but her generous ſympathy was, ſoon after, rewarded by his appearance. He was now perfectly recovered from the wounds, received, during his perilous adventure among the Pyrenees, the mention of which ſerved to heighten to the parties, who had been involved in it, the ſenſe of their preſent happineſs. New congratulations paſſed between them, and round the ſupper table appeared a group of faces, ſmiling with felicity, but with a felicity, which had in each a different character. The ſmile of Blanche was frank and gay, that of Emily tender and penſive; Valancourt's was rapturous, tender and gay alternately; Monſ. St. Foix's was joyous, and that of the Count, as he looked on the ſurrounding party, expreſſed the tempered complacency of benevolence; while the features of the Counteſs, Henri, and Monſ. Bonnac, diſcovered fainter traces of animation. Poor Monſ. Du Pont did not, by his preſence, throw a ſhade of regret over the company; for, when he had diſcovered, that Valancourt was not unworthy of the eſteem of Emily, he determined ſeriouſly to endeavour at the conqueſt of his own hopeleſs affection, and had immediately withdrawn from Chateau-le-Blanc—a conduct, which Emily now underſtood, and rewarded with her admiration and pity.

The Count and his gueſts continued together till a late hour, yielding to the delights of ſocial gaiety, and to the ſweets of friendſhip. When Annette heard of the arrival of Valancourt, Ludovico had ſome difficulty to prevent her going into the ſupper room, to expreſs her joy, for ſhe declared, that ſhe had never been ſo rejoiced at any *accident* as this, ſince ſhe had found Ludovico himſelf.

CHAP. LVIII.

"Now my taſk is ſmoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin low doth bend,
And, from thence, can ſoar as ſoon
To the corner's of the moon."

MILTON.

THE marriages of the Lady Blanche and Emily St. Aubert were celebrated, on the ſame day, and with the ancient baronial magnificence, at Chateau-le-Blanc. The feaſts were held in the great hall of the caſtle, which, on this occaſion, was hung with ſuperb new tapeſtry, repreſenting the exploits of Charlemagne and his twelve peers; here, were ſeen the Saracens, with their horrible viſors, advancing to battle; and there, were diſplayed the wild ſolemnities of incantation, and the necromantic feats, exhibited by the magician Jarl before the Emperor. The ſumptuous banners of the family of Villeroi, which had long ſlept in duſt, were once more unfurled, to wave over the gothic points of painted caſements; and muſic echoed, in many a lingering cloſe, through every winding gallery and colonnade of that vaſt edifice.

As Annette looked down from the corridor upon the hall whoſe arches and windows were illuminated with brilliant feſtoons of lamps, and gazed on the ſplendid dreſſes of the dancers, the coſtly liveries of the attendants, the canopies of purple velvet and gold, and liſtened to the gay ſtrains that floated along the vaulted roof, ſhe almoſt fancied herſelf in an inchanted palace, and declared, that ſhe had not met with any place, which charmed her ſo much, ſince ſhe read the fairy tales; nay, that the fairies themſelves, at their nightly revels in this old hall, could diſplay nothing finer; while old Dorothee, as ſhe ſurveyed the ſcene, ſighed, and ſaid, the caſtle looked as it was wont to do in the time of her youth.

After gracing the feſtivities of Chateau-le-Blanc, for ſome days Valancourt and Emily took leave of their kind friends, and returned to La Vallee, where the faithful Thereſa received them with unfeigned joy, and the pleaſant ſhades welcomed them with a thouſand tender and affecting remembrances; and, while they wandered together over the ſcenes, ſo long inhabited by the late Monſ. and Madame St. Aubert, and Emily pointed out, with penſive affection, their favourite haunts, her preſent happineſs was heightened, by conſidering, that it would have been worthy of their approbation, could they have witneſſed it.

Valancourt led her to the plane tree on the terrace, where he had firſt ventured to declare his love, and where now the remembrance of the anxiety he had then ſuffered, and the retroſpect of all the dangers and misfortunes they had each encountered, ſince laſt they ſat together beneath its broad branches, exalted the ſenſe of their preſent felicity, which, on this ſpot, ſacred to the memory of St. Aubert, they ſolemnly vowed to deſerve, as far as poſſible, by endeavouring to imitate his benevolence,—by remembering, that ſuperior attainments of every

fort bring with them duties of ſuperior exertion, and by affording to their fellow beings, together with that portion of ordinary comforts, which proſperity always owes to misfortune, the example of lives paſſed in happy thankfulneſs to GOD, and, therefore, in careful tenderneſs to his creatures.

Soon after their return to La Vallee, the brother of Valancourt came to congratulate him on his marriage, and to pay his reſpects to Emily, with whom he was ſo much pleaſed, as well as with the proſpect of rational happineſs, which theſe nuptials offered to Valancourt, that he immediately reſigned to him a part of the rich domain, the whole of which, as he had no family, would of courſe deſcend to his brother, on his deceaſe.

The eſtates, at Tholouſe, were diſpoſed of, and Emily purchaſed of Monſ. Queſnel the ancient domain of her late father, where, having given Annette a marriage portion, ſhe ſettled her as the houſekeeper, and Ludovico as the ſteward; but, ſince both Valancourt and herſelf preferred the pleaſant and long loved ſhades of La Vallee to the magnificence of Epourville, they continued to reſide there, paſſing, however, a few months in the year at the birth place of St. Aubert, in tender reſpect to his memory.

The legacy, which had been bequeathed to Emily by Signora Laurentini, ſhe begged Valancourt would allow her to reſign to Monſ. Bonnac; and Valancourt, when ſhe made the requeſt, felt all the value of the compliment it conveyed. The caſtle of Udolpho, alſo, deſcended to the wife of Monſ. Bonnac, who was the neareſt ſurviving relation of the houſe of that name, and thus affluence reſtored his long oppreſſed ſpirits to peace, and his family to comfort.

O! how joyful it is to tell of happineſs, ſuch as that of Valancourt and Emily; to relate, that, after ſuffering under the oppreſſion of the vicious and the diſdain of the weak, they were, at length, reſtored to each other—to the beloved landſcapes of their native country—to the ſecureſt felicity of this life, that of aſpiring to moral and labouring for intellectual improvement—to the pleaſures of enlightened ſociety, and to the exerciſe of the benevolence which had always animated their hearts; while the bowers of La Vallee became, once more, the retreat of goodneſs, wiſdom and domeſtic bleſſedneſs!

O! uſeful may it be to have ſhewn, that, though the vicious can ſometimes pour affliction upon the good, their power is tranſient and their puniſhment certain; and that innocence, though oppreſſed by injuſtice, ſhall, ſupported by patience, finally triumph over misfortune.

And, if the weak hand, that has recorded this tale, has, by its ſcenes, beguiled the mourner of one hour of ſorrow, or, by its moral, taught him to ſuſtain it—the effort, however humble, has not been vain, nor is the writer unrewarded.

FINIS.